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# **GREECE UNDER THE ROMANS.**



# GREECE UNDER THE ROMANS

A HISTORICAL VIEW

OF THE

CONDITION OF THE GREEK NATION,

FROM THE TIME OF ITS CONQUEST BY THE ROMANS  
UNTIL THE EXTINCTION OF THE ROMAN  
EMPIRE IN THE EAST.

B. C. 146—A. D. 717.

BY GEORGE FINLAY, K. R. G.,

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*Καὶ ἵς μὲν ἀπελάσειν ἴσως τὸ μὴ μυθῶδες  
αὐτῶν ἀντιεισέλθον φανήσεται.*

THUCYD. I. 22.

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## ERRATUM.

*For Achæa, throughout the work, read Achaia.*

## P R E F A C E.

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THE social and political organization of life among the Greeks and Romans was essentially different, even during the period when they were subject to the same government ; and this difference must be impressed on the mind, before the relative state of civilization in the Eastern and Western empires can be thoroughly understood.

The Romans were a tribe of warriors. All their institutions, even those relating to property and agriculture, were formed with reference to war. The people of the western empire, including the greater part of Italy, consisted of a variety of races, who were either in a low state of civilization at the time of their conquest by the Romans, or else had been already subjected to foreigners. They were generally treated as inferior beings, and the framework of their national institutions was every where destroyed. The provincials of the West, when thus left destitute of every bond of national union, were exposed to the invasions of warlike tribes, which, under the first impulses of civilization, were driven

on to seek the means of supplying new wants. The moment, therefore, that the military forces of the Roman government were unable to repulse these strangers, the population of the provinces was exposed to subjection, slavery, or extermination, according as the interests or the policy of the invading barbarians might determine.

In that portion of the eastern empire peopled by the Greeks, the case was totally different. There the executive power of the Roman government was modified by a system of national institutions, which conferred, even on the rural population, some control over their local affairs. The sovereign authority was relieved from that petty sphere of administration and police, which meddles with the daily occupations of the people. The Romans found this branch of government completely organized, in a manner not closely connected with the political sovereignty, and the institutions of the Greeks proved more powerful than the despotism of their conquerors. Their nationality continued to exist in full vigour, even after their conquest; and this nationality was again called into activity when the Roman government, from increasing weakness, gradually began to neglect the duties of administration.

The conquest of Greece by the Romans had indeed left the national existence nearly unaltered; but time, as it changed the government of Rome,

modified likewise the institutions of the Greeks, Still, neither the Roman Cæsars, nor the Byzantine emperors, any more than the Frank princes and Turkish sultans, were able to interrupt the continual transmission of a political inheritance by each generation of the Greek race to its successors; though it is too true, that, from age to age, the value of that inheritance was gradually diminished.

The history of the Greek nation, even as a subject people, cannot be destitute of interest and instruction. The Greeks are the only existing representatives of the ancient world. They have maintained possession of their country, their language, and their social organization, against physical and moral forces, which have swept from the face of the earth all their early cotemporaries, friends and enemies. It can hardly be disputed, that the preservation of their national existence is to be partly attributed to the institutions which they have received from their ancestors. The work now offered to the public will attempt to trace the effects of the ancient institutions on the fortunes of the people under the Roman government, and to shew in what manner they were modified and supported by other circumstances.

It was impossible, in the following pages, to omit treating, at times, of events already illustrated by the genius of Gibbon. But these events must be viewed by the historian of the Roman empire, and of



the Greek people, under very different aspects. The observations of both may be equally true, though inferior skill and judgment may render the views, in the present work, less correct as a picture, and less impressive as a history. The same facts afford innumerable conclusions to different individuals, and in different ages. History will ever remain inexhaustible; and much as we have read of the Greeks and Romans, and deeply as we appear to have studied their records, there is much still to be learned from the same sources.

In the references to the authorities followed in this work, a preference will often be shewn to those modern treatises, which ought to be in the hands of the general reader. It has often required profound investigation, and long discussion, to elicit a fact now generally known, or to settle an opinion now universally adopted, and in such cases it would be useless to collect a long array of ancient passages.

# CHRONOLOGY.

---

## CHRONOLOGY FOR CHAPTER I.

**BEFORE  
CHRIST.**

- 323. Death of Alexander the Great.
- 321. Egyptian monarchy of the Ptolemies established by the defeat of the Regent Perdiccas.
- 312. Era of the Seleucidæ dated from the time Seleucus recovered Babylonia, which is considered as the foundation of the Syrian monarchy.
- 310. Agathocles invaded the Carthaginian territories in Africa.
- 303. Demetrius Poliorcetes compelled to raise the siege of Rhodes.
- 300. The kingdom of Pontus established its independence under Mithridates Ariobarzanes.
- 280. Commencement of the Achæan League.  
Pyrrhus landed in Italy to defend the Greeks against the Romans.
- 279. The Gauls invaded Greece, and were repulsed at Delphi.
- 278. Nicomedes secures himself in the kingdom of Bithynia by calling the Gauls into Asia.
- 271. The Romans completed the conquest of Magna Græcia.
- 250. The Parthian monarchy founded by Arsaces.  
The Greek kingdom of Bactriana founded.
- 241. Attalus king of Pergamus.
- 212. Syracuse taken by the Romans, and the Sicilian Greeks subjected.
- 197. Battle of Cynoscephalæ.
- 196. The Greeks declared to be free by Flamininus at the Isthmian games.
- 190. Antiochus the Great invaded Greece.

BEFORE  
CHRIST.

- 188. The laws of Lycurgus abrogated by Philopœmen.
- 168. Battle of Pydna, and end of the Macedonian monarchy.
- 167. One thousand of the principal citizens in Achæa carried to Rome as hostages.
- 146. Mummius took Corinth, and reduced Greece to a Roman province.
- 141. Extinction of the Greek monarchy of Bactriana.
- 133 or 102. Rebellion of slaves in the Attic silver mines.
- 86. Sylla took Athens.
- 77. Depredations of the pirates throughout Greece.
- 67. Crete conquered by Metellus.
- 66. Monarchy of the Seleucidæ destroyed by Pompey.
- 48. Cæsar destroyed Megara.
- 44. Cæsar restored Corinth as a Roman colony.
- 30. Augustus founded Nicopolis.
- 21. Augustus deprived Athens of its jurisdiction over Eretria and Ægina, and established the confederacy of the free Laconian cities.
- A. D. Year of Rome, 753. Olympiad, 194. 4th year. The birth of Christ in the year 5509 of the world according to the Byzantins, or 5507, as the Greek fathers place the birth of Christ two years before the received era.
- 22. The Senate restricted the right of asylum claimed by many Greek temples and sanctuaries.
- 93. Josephus. Epictetus.
- 100. Plutarch.
- 124. Arrian. Lucian.
- 143. Herodes Atticus consul.
- 150. Appian.
- 160. Ptolemy.
- 170. Pausanias. Galen.
- 200. Oppian. Clemens Alexandrinus. Diogenes Laertius. Philostratus.
- 212. Edict of Caracalla conferred Roman citizenship on all the free inhabitants of the empire.
- 215. Athenæus.
- 220. Dion Cassius.
- 226. Artaxerxes overthrew the Parthian empire, and founded that of the Sassanides. Year 538 of the era of the Seleucidæ.

A. D.

- 240. Herodian. *Ælian*. Longinus.
- 251. The Emperor Decius defeated and slain by the Goths.
- 267. Invasion of Greece by the Goths. Athens taken, and recovered by Dexippus.
- 284. Era of Diocletian, called the era of the martyrs.
- 312. 1st September. The cycle of indictions was first reckoned from this year.
- 325. Council of Nice.
- 330. Dedication of Constantinople as the capital of the Roman empire.

## CHAPTER II.

- 330. Foundation of Constantinople.
- 332. Cherson assists Constantine against the Goths.
- 337. Constantine II. Constantius, Constant, emperors.
- 361. Julian.
- 362. Julian re-establishes paganism as the religion of the empire. Earthquake in Greece, Asia Minor, Palestine, and Sicily.
- 363. Jovian.
- 364. Valentinian Valens.
- 365. Earthquake in Greece, Asia Minor, and Sicily. *AMM. MAR.* xxvi. 10.
- 375. Earthquake in Greece and Crete, before the death of Valentinian, felt especially in Peloponnesus. *ZOSIMUS*, iv. 18. Gratian.
- 376. Visigoths permitted by Valens to pass the Danube.
- 378. Defeat and death of Valens. Valentinian II.
- 379. Theodosius.
- 392. Law of Theodosius against the abuse of asylums in churches.
- 395. Arcadius, and Honorius. Huns ravage Asia Minor as far as Syria. Alaric invades Greece
- 398. Alaric named governor of Eastern Illyricum.
- 408. Theodosius II.
- 428. Genseric enters Africa with the Vandals.
- 438. Publication of Theodosian Code.
- 439. Genseric takes Carthage. Eudocia (Athenais) visits Jerusalem.
- 441. Theodosius sends a fleet against Genseric.

- A. D.
- 442. Attila invades Thrace and Macedonia.
  - 447. Attila again ravages Thrace, and takes seventy cities.
  - 450. Marcian.
  - 457. Leo, called by the Greeks the Great, the Elder, and the Butcher.
  - 458. Great earthquake felt at Antioch and Cnidus, and in Cos, the Cyclades, Isauria, Ionia, and Thrace.
  - 460. Earthquake at Cyzicus.
  - 462. Marcellinus, who had defended Sicily against the Vandals, seizes Dalmatia, and holds it independent of the two empires.
  - 465. Fire, which destroyed eight of the sixteen quarters of Constantinople.
  - 468. Leo sends an expedition against Genserich.
  - 469. Excessive rains at Constantinople and in Bithynia.
  - 474. Leo II. Zeno the Isaurian.
  - 480. Earthquakes felt for forty days successively at Constantinople. The statue of Theodosius the Great thrown down from the column on which it stood.
  - 485. Bulgarians appear beyond the Danube.
  - 491. Anastasius, (Flavius,) called Dicorus.
  - 499. Bulgarians invade the empire.
  - 507. Anastasius constructs the long wall to protect Constantinople.
  - 518. Terrible earthquake in Dardania and Illyria. Justin.
  - 527. Justinian ascends the throne.

## CHAPTER III.

- 527. Accession of Justinian. Gretes, King of the Heruls, receives baptism at Constantinople. The Tzans submit to the Roman empire.
- 528. Gordas, king of the Huns on the Cimmerian Bosphorus, receives baptism at Constantinople, but is murdered by his subjects on his return. Germanus defeats the Antes on the banks of the Danube. Justinian commences his lavish expenditure on fortifications and public buildings over the whole empire.
- 529. First edition of the Code published. Rebellion of the Samaritans. Romans defeated by Persians at Mindon.

A. D.

- 530. Persians defeated at Dara. Hilbudius defeats the Slavonians.
- 531. Battle at Callinicum. Death of Cobad. Negotiations for peace with Persia. Dreadful plague commenced, which ravaged the empire fifty years.
- 532. Great sedition of the Nika at Constantinople, suppressed by Belisarius. War declared against the Vandals. The Abbot Dionysius Exiguus, by his tables of the Easter festivals, fixed the date of the Christian era.
- 533. Peace with Persia. Hilbudius defeated and slain by the Slavonians. Conquest of Africa. Institutions and Pandects published.
- 534. Sardinia, Corsica, and the Balearic Island occupied by the Romans. Belisarius returns to Constantinople with Gelimer. Second edition of Code.
- 535. Conquest of Sicily. Dalmatia conquered and reconquered.
- 536. Revolt of Roman troops in Africa. Belisarius invades Italy, and takes Rome. A very cold year, the sun shining dimly.
- 537. Siege of Rome by Witiges. Exile and death of Pope Silvester. Dedication of St Sophias at Constantinople.
- 538. Bulgarians invade the empire. Milan destroyed by Goths. Famine in the north of Italy.
- 539. Witiges sends ambassadors to the Lombards and Persians to demand assistance. Surrender of Ravenna, and capture of Witiges. Romans defeated by Gepids. A plundering incursion of the Huns extended over Thrace and Greece, to the Isthmus of Corinth. *Proc. Pers.* ii. 4.
- 540. Chosroes invades Syria. Capture and sack of Antioch. Totila king of the Goths.
- 541. Consulate abolished by Justinian after existing 1049 years.
- 542. Belisarius employed against Chosroes in person. Earthquake and plague at Constantinople, 10,000 persons perished in one day.
- 543. Solomon, the governor of Africa, defeated and killed by the Moors.
- 544. Belisarius sent to oppose Totila in Italy.
- 546. Rome taken by Totila. John the Patrician takes the command in Africa.
- 548. Belisarius quits Italy.



A. D.

- 549. Rome retaken by Totila. Sicily conquered, but recovered by Artaban.
- 550. Slavonians and Huns invade the empire. Persian war in Lazica. Earthquakes in Phœnicia, Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia.
- 551. Introduction of silk worm. Narses sent to Italy. Earthquake in Greece.
- 552. Totila defeated, and Rome retaken by Narses.
- 553. Goths under Teras again defeated. Conquests in Spain.
- 554. Franks and Germans defeated by Narses. Earthquakes at Constantinople, Nicomedia, Berytus, and Cos, and church at Cyzicus fell during service.
- 556. Terrible earthquake at Constantinople. The emperor did not wear his crown for forty days. AGATHIAS, v. 145.
- 558. Zabergan, king of the Cutigour Huns, defeated before the walls of Constantinople by Belisarius. Embassy of the Avars.
- 563. Treaty of peace with Persia. Belisarius accused of being privy to a conspiracy, falls into disgrace, and his property is confiscated.
- 564. Embassy of the Turks. Justinian favours the Eutychians.
- 565. Death of Justinian.

## CHAPTER IV.

- 565. November. Justin the Second ascended the throne.
- 567. Kingdom of Gepids destroyed by Lombards.
- 568. Italy invaded by Lombards.
- 570. Mohammed born.
- 571. Justin sends an embassy to the khan of the Turks.
- 572. War commenced between the Roman empire and Persia.
- 573. War with the Avars.
- 574. Infirm health of Justin induces him to name Tiberius Cæsar.
- 576. Battle of Melitene. Romans penetrate to Caspian Sea.
- 578. Death of Justin. Tiberius emperor.
- 579. Death of Chosroes.
- 580. Battle of Callinicum. Avars take Sirmium.

A. D.

581. Persian army defeated by Maurice at Constantine.
582. Tiberius names Maurice his successor. Dies.  
John the Faster, Patriarch of Constantinople, uses the title  
Ecumenic, granted to the patriarchs by Justinian.
583. Avars recommence war.
586. Battle of Solacon.
587. Roman army defeated by Avars.
588. Sedition of the army employed against Persia.
590. Rebellion in Persia. Chosroes, son of Hormisdas, flies to  
Maurice.
591. Chosroes II. restored by Maurice. Maurice quits the capital  
to march against the Avars.
593. Priscus defeats the Sclavonians.
600. Maurice concludes a peace with the Avars without ransoming  
the prisoners.
601. War recommenced.
602. Sedition of the Roman army. Maurice dethroned. Phocas  
emperor.
603. Chosroes declares war.
604. Phocas concludes a peace with the Avars.
609. Persians advance to Chalcedon.
610. Phocas slain. Heraclius emperor.
613. Sedition of the Jews.
614. Sisebut, king of the Visigoths, conquers the greater part of  
the Roman possessions in Spain.
615. Heraclius sends Niketas the Patrician to seize the wealth of  
John, the charitable patriarch of Alexandria.
616. Persians invade Egypt.
618. Abolition of public distribution of grain at Constantinople.
619. Avars attempt to seize Heraclius by treachery.
620. Peace with Avars.
622. First campaign of Heraclius against the Persians.  
16th July. Era of the Hegira of Mohammed.
623. Second campaign against Persians. Roman possessions in  
Spain lost.
624. Third campaign.
625. Fourth campaign.
626. Constantinople besieged by Persians and Avars.
627. Fifth campaign.

A. D.

- 628. Sixth campaign. Death of Chosroes. Peace with Siroes.
- 629. Heraclius carries the Holy Cross to Jerusalem.
- 630. Heraclius occupied with ecclesiastical reforms.
- 632. Death of Mohammed. Era of Jezdedjerd reckoned from 16th June.
- 633. Invasion of Syria by Arabs. Bozra taken.
- 634. Battle of Adjnadin. Abubekr's death. Heraclius leaves Syria.
- 635. Arabs take Emesa, Alhadir, and Kinnesrin.
- 636. Baalbec pays tribute. Battle of Yermouk.
- 637. Caliph Omer takes possession of Jerusalem. Capture of Aleppo.
- 638. Constantine, son of Heraclius, defeated, and Antioch taken. Battle of Cæsarea.
- 639. Arabs conquer Mesopotamia. Ecthesis of Heraclius.
- 640. Arabs conquer Egypt, and capture Alexandria.
- 641. Death of Heraclius.

## CHAPTER V.

- 641. Constantine the Third and Heracleonas emperors. Constans the Second. Taking of Alexandria by the Saracens.
- 645. Persia conquered by the Arabs.
- 646. Alexandria retaken by the Romans, and recovered by Arabs.
- 647. Arabs invade Africa.
- 648. Arabs invade Cyprus. Type of Constans the Second.
- 651. Cos and Rhodes invaded by the Arabs. The colossus destroyed.
- 654. Pope Martin brought to Constantinople for trial.
- 655. Battle between the Roman and Arab fleets off Mount Phoenix.
- 658. Expedition of Constans against the Sclavonians. Peace with the Caliph Moawyah.
- 660. Constans orders his brother Theodore the Deacon to be executed.
- 662. Constans quits Constantinople, and passes the winter at Athens.

A. D.

- 663. Visits Italy, and is defeated before Beneventum. Visits Rome. Retires to Sicily.
- 665. Wars of the Romans and Saracens in Africa.
- 668. Assassination of Constans. Constantine IV. Pogonatus.
- 669. Constantine visits Sicily to avenge his father's death.
- 670. Cairowan founded, and taken by the Romans.
- 672. Invention of Greek fire by Callinicus. Saracens besiege Constantinople, and continue the attack every summer for seven years.
- 672. Saracens form a winter camp at Cyzicus.
- 679. Defeat of the Saracen armament. Peace with Moawyah. Constantine defeated by the Bulgarians.
- 680. General council of the church at Constantinople against the Monothelites.
- 681. Constantine deprives his brothers of the title of Augustus, and cuts off their noses.
- 685. Death of Constantine Pogonatus. Justinian the Second called Rhinometus.
- 688. Bulgarian war.
- 692. War with the Saracens, and desertion of the Sclavonian troops. Establishment of Haratch. General council of the church *in Trullo*.
- 695. Revolution at Constantinople, Justinian dethroned, his nose cut off, and sent into exile at Cherson. Leontius emperor.
- 697. First doge of Venice elected. Carthage taken by the Saracens, retaken, and lost by the Romans.
- 698. Leontius dethroned, and Tiberius Apsimar emperor.
- 703. Successful campaign of Heraclius, the brother of the Emperor Tiberius, against the Saracens.
- 705. Justinian returns to Constantinople, with a Bulgarian army, and dethrones Tiberius Apsimar.
- 710. Cruelties of Justinian against Ravenna and Cherson.
- 711. Army at Cherson rebels, and places Philippicus on the throne. Death of Justinian.
- 712. Philippicus emperor.
- 713. Philippicus dethroned. Anastasius the Second emperor.
- 715. Fleet sent against the Saracens, under John the Deacon, rebels, and returns, having appointed Theodosius emperor.

A. D.

- 716. Anastasius dethroned, and Theodosius the Third emperor.  
Leo the Isaurian declared emperor at Amorium.
- 717. Constantinople besieged by the Saracens.
- 718. Saracen armament defeated.
- 723. Sardinia conquered by the Saracens.
- 726. Edict of Leo against picture-worship.
- 727. The Greek expedition, to restore image-worship, defeated  
before Constantinople.

# GREECE UNDER THE ROMANS.

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## CHAPTER I.

FROM THE CONQUEST OF GREECE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT  
OF CONSTANTINOPLE AS CAPITAL OF THE ROMAN EM-  
PIRE. B. C. 146, to A. D. 330.

INTRODUCTION — CHANGES PRODUCED BY THE CONQUESTS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT ON THE CONDITION OF THE GREEK NATION — CAUSES OF THE CONQUEST OF GREECE BY THE ROMANS — TREATMENT OF GREECE AFTER ITS CONQUEST — EFFECTS OF THE MITHRIDATIC WAR ON THE STATE OF GREECE — RUIN OF THE COUNTRY BY THE PIRATES OF CILICIA — NATURE OF THE ROMAN PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION IN GREECE — FISCAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE ROMANS — DEPOPULATION OF GREECE CAUSED BY THE ROMAN GOVERNMENT — ROMAN COLONIES ESTABLISHED IN GREECE — POLITICAL CONDITION OF GREECE FROM THE TIME OF AUGUSTUS TO THAT OF CARACALLA — THE GREEKS AND ROMANS NEVER SHEWED ANY DISPOSITION TO UNITE — STATE OF SOCIETY AMONG THE GREEKS — INFLUENCE OF RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY — SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE GREEKS AFFECTED BY THE WANT OF COLONIES OF EMIGRATION — EFFECTS PRODUCED IN GREECE BY THE INROADS OF THE GOTHs — CHANGES WHICH PRECEDED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSTANTINOPLE AS THE CAPITAL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

THE conquests of Alexander the Great effected a permanent change in the political condition of the Greek nation, and this change powerfully influenced its moral and social state during the whole period of its subjection to the Roman empire. The international system of policy by which Alexander connected Greece with Western Asia and Egypt, was

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only effaced by the religion of Mohammed, and the conquests of the Arabs. Though Alexander was himself a Greek, both from education, and the prejudices cherished by the pride of ancestry, still, neither the people of Macedonia, nor the chief part of the army, whose discipline and valour had secured his victories, was Greek, either in language or feelings.\* Had Alexander, therefore, determined on organizing his empire with the view of uniting the Macedonians and Persians in common feelings of opposition to the Greek nation, there can be no doubt, that he could easily have accomplished the design. The Greeks might then have found themselves enabled to adopt a very different course in their national career from that which they were compelled to follow by the powerful influence exercised over them by Alexander's conduct. Alexander himself, undoubtedly, perceived, that the greater numbers of the Persians, and their equality, if not superiority, in civilization to the Macedonians, rendered it necessary for him to seek some powerful ally to prevent the absorption of the Macedonians in the Persian population, the loss of their language, manners, and nationality, and the speedy change of his empire into the sovereignty of a mere Græco-Persian dynasty. It did not escape his discernment, that the political institutions of the Greeks created a principle of nationality capable of combating the unalterable laws of the Medes and Persians.

\* Q. CURTIUS, vi. 9. 35. K. O. MÜLLER ueber die Makedoner, p. 34. MÜLLER's Dorians, i. 499, Eng. trans. PLUTARCH (*Aratus*, 38) shews us the light in which the Greeks viewed the noblest Macedonians when compared with the Spartans.

Alexander was the noblest model of a conqueror ; his ambition aspired at eclipsing the glory of his unparalleled victories by the universal prosperity which was to flow from his civil government. New cities and extended commerce were to found an era in the world's history. Even the strength of his empire was to be based on a political principle which he has the merit of discovering, and of which he proved the efficacy ; this principle was the amalgamation of his subjects into one people by permanent institutions. All other conquerors have endeavoured to augment their power by the subjection of one race to another.\* The merit of Alexander is very much increased by the nature of his position with regard to the Greek nation. The Greeks were not favourably disposed either towards his empire or his person ; they would willingly have destroyed both as the surest way of securing their own liberty. But the moral energy of the Greek national character did not escape the observation of Alexander, and he resolved to render this quality available for the preservation of his empire, by introducing into the East those municipal institutions which gave it vigour, and thus facilitating the infusion of some portion of the Hellenic character into the hearts of his conquered subjects.

The moderation of Alexander in the execution of his plans of reform and change is as remarkable as

\* History and poetry seem to have taken Alexander as the type of an ambitious warrior. The phrase, "Macedonia's madman," and the circumstance of his weeping for worlds to conquer, hardly convey a correct idea of one whose views of glory were so intimately connected with the effects his conquests were to produce. From Alexandria to Candahar the unlettered do him more justice.

the wisdom of his extensive projects. In order to mould the Asiatics to his wishes, he did not attempt to enforce laws and constitutions similar to those of Greece. He had profited too well by the lessons of Aristotle to think of treating man as a machine. But he introduced Greek civilization as an important element in his civil government, and established Greek colonies with political rights throughout his conquests. It is true, that he seized all the unlimited power of the Persian monarchs, but, at the same time, he strove to secure administrative responsibility, and to establish free institutions in municipal government. Any laws or constitution which Alexander could have promulgated to enforce his system of consolidating the population of his empire into one body, would most probably have been immediately repealed by his successors, in consequence of the hostile feelings of the Macedonian army. But it was more difficult to escape from the tendency imprinted on the administration by the systematic arrangements which Alexander had introduced. He seems to have been fully aware of this fact, though it is impossible to trace the whole series of measures he adopted to accelerate the completion of his great project of creating a new state of society, and a new nation, as well as a new empire, in the imperfect records of his civil administration which have survived. His death left his own scheme incomplete, yet his success was wonderful; for though his empire was immediately dismembered, its numerous portions long retained a deep imprint of that Greek civilization which he had introduced. The influence of his philanthropic policy survived the kingdoms which his arms had founded,

and tempered the despotic sway of the Romans by its superior power over society ; nor was the influence of Alexander's government utterly effaced in Asia until Mahommed changed the government, the religion, and the frame of society in the East.

The monarchs of Egypt, Syria, Pergamus, and Bactriana, who were either Macedonians or Greeks, respected the civil institutions, the language, and the religion of their native subjects, however adverse they might be to Greek usages ; and the sovereigns of Bithynia, Pontus, Cappadocia, and Parthia, though native princes, retained a deep tincture of Greek civilization after they had thrown off the Macedonian yoke. They not only encouraged the arts, sciences, and literature of Greece, but they even protected the peculiar political constitutions of the Greek colonies settled in their dominions, though at variance with the Asiatic views of monarchical government.

The Greeks and Macedonians long continued separate nations, though a number of the causes which ultimately produced their fusion began to exert some influence shortly after the death of Alexander. The moral and social causes which enabled the Greeks to acquire a complete superiority over the Macedonian race, and ultimately to absorb it as a component element of their own nation, were the same which afterwards enabled them to destroy the Roman influence in the East. For several generations, the Greeks appeared the feebler party in their struggle with the Macedonians. The new kingdoms, into which Alexander's empire was divided, were placed in very different circumstances from the older Greek states. Two separate divisions were

created in the Hellenic world, and the Macedonian monarchies on the one hand, and the free Greeks on the other, formed two distinct international systems of policy. The Macedonian sovereigns had a balance of power to maintain, in which the free states of Europe could only be directly interested when the overwhelming influence of a conqueror placed their independence in jeopardy. The multifarious diplomatic relations of the free states among themselves required constant attention, not only to maintain their political independence, but even to protect their property and civil rights. The two great divisions of Hellenic civic society were often governed by opposite views and feelings in morals and politics, though they were continually placed in collision or alliance with one another in their struggles to preserve the balance of their respective systems.

The immense power and wealth of the Seleucidæ and Ptolemies rendered vain all the efforts of the small European states to maintain the high military, civil, and literary rank they had previously occupied. Their best soldiers, their wisest statesmen, and their ablest authors, were induced to emigrate to a more profitable and extensive scene of action. Alexandria became the capital of the Hellenic world. Yet the history of the European states still continued to maintain its predominant interest, and as a political lesson, the struggles of the Achæan League to defend the independence of Greece against Macedonia and Rome, are as instructive as the annals of Athens and Sparta. The European Greeks at this period perceived all the danger to which their liberties were exposed from the wealth and power of the Asiatic

monarchies, and they vainly endeavoured to effect a combination of all the free states into one federal body. Whatever might have been the success of such a combination, it certainly offered the only hope of preserving the liberty of Greece against the powerful states with which the altered condition of the civilized world had brought her into contact.

At the very time when the Macedonian kings were attacking the independence of Greece, and the Asiatic courts undermining the morals of the Greek nation, the Greek colonies, whose independence, from their remote situation, was secured against the attacks of the Eastern monarchs, were conquered by the Romans. Many circumstances tending to weaken the Greeks, and over which they had no control, followed one another with fatal celerity. The invasion of the Gauls, though bravely repulsed, inflicted great losses on Greece.\* Shortly after, the Romans completed the conquest of the Greek states in Italy.† From that time the Sicilian Greeks were too feeble to be any thing but spectators of the fierce struggle of the Romans and Carthaginians for the sovereignty of their island, and though the city of Syracuse courageously defended its independence, the struggle was a hopeless tribute to national glory.‡ The cities of Cyrenaica had been long subject to the Ptolemies, and the republics on the shores of the Black Sea had been unable to maintain their liberties against the repeated attacks of the sovereigns of Pontus and Bithynia.§

Though the Macedonians and Greeks were sepa-

\* B. C. 279.

† B. C. 272.

‡ B. C. 212.

§ B. C. 220. POLYBIUS, iv. 56. STRABO, l. 7. p. 93. Ed. Tauch. MEMNONIS HERACLEÆ, *Ponti Histor. excerpt.* Lipsiæ, 1816. Ed. J. C. Orellius.

rated into two divisions by the opposite interests of the Asiatic monarchies and the European republics, still they were united by a powerful bond of national feelings. There was a strong similarity in the education, religion, and social position of the individual citizen in every state, whether Greek or Macedonian. Wherever Hellenic civilization was received, the free citizens formed only one part of the population, whether the other was composed of slaves or subjects; and this peculiarity placed their civil interests as Greeks in a more important light than their political differences as subjects of various states. The Macedonian Greeks of Asia and Egypt were a ruling class, governed, it is true, by an absolute sovereign, but having their interest so identified with his, in the vital question of retaining the administration of the country, that the Greeks, even in the absolute monarchies, formed a favoured and privileged class. In the Greek republics, the case was not very dissimilar; there, too, a small body of free citizens ruled a large slave or subject population, whose numbers required not only constant attention on the part of the rulers, but likewise a deep conviction of an ineffaceable separation in interests and character, to preserve the ascendancy. This peculiarity in the position of the Greeks, cherished their exclusive nationality, and created a feeling, that laws of honour and of nations forbade free men ever to make common cause with slaves. The influence of this feeling was visible for centuries on the laws and education of the free citizens of Greece, and it was equally powerful wherever Hellenic civilization spread.\*

\* PLUTARCH, *Sylla*, xviii. PLUTARCH, in *Hyperide*. *Cato*, 78. APPIAN *De Bell. Civ. I.* TACITUS *Ann.* xiv. 42. *Dio*. xxix. 5. 1. 32. 39.

Alexander's conquests soon exercised a widely extended influence on the commerce, literature, morals, and religion of the Greeks. A direct communication was soon opened with India, the centre of Asia, and the southern coast of Africa. The immense extension of the commercial transactions of the Asiatic and Egyptian Greeks, soon diminished the relative wealth and importance of the European states, and at the same time, their stationary position assumed the aspect of decline from the rapidly increasing power and civilization of Western Europe. A considerable trade began to be carried on directly with the great commercial depots of the East which had formerly afforded large profits to the Greeks of Europe by its indirect channels. As soon as Rome rose to some degree of power, its inhabitants, if not its franchised citizens, traded with the East, as is proved by the existence of political relations between Rome and Rhodes, more than three centuries before the Christian era.\* There can be no doubt, that the connection between the two states had its origin in the interests of trade. New channels were opened for mercantile enterprise as direct communications diminished the expense of transport. The increase of trade rendered piracy a profitable occupation, for sovereigns and merchants were compelled to navigate under the protection of powerful states, in

\* POLYBIUS, xxx. 5. 6. CLINTON's *Fasti Hellenici*, iii. 84. 2. The earliest connection of Rome with Carthage was also commercial, consequently, the trading portion of the Roman state was not unimportant, though it was not represented in the body politic. This explains the adverse assertions of Polybius in his first book, (c. 1.) with the fact of the existence of the Carthaginian treaties noticed in his third. The Romans had trade worth regulating by treaty five hundred years before the Christian era, though personally they despised commerce.



order to secure their property from extortion and plunder.\* These alterations in commercial affairs proved every way disadvantageous to the small republics of European Greece; and Alexandria and Rhodes soon occupied the position once held by Corinth and Athens.

The literature of a people is so intimately connected with the local circumstances which influence education, taste, and morals, that it can never be transplanted without undergoing a great alteration. It is not wonderful, therefore, that the literature of the Greeks, after the extension of their dominion in the East, should have undergone a great change; but it seems remarkable that this change should have proved invariably injurious to all its peculiar excellencies. It is singular, at the same time, to find how little the Greeks occupied themselves in the examination of the stores of knowledge possessed by the Eastern nations. The situation and interests of the Asiatic and Egyptian Greeks must have compelled many to learn the languages of the countries which they inhabited, and the literature of the East was laid open to their investigation. They appear to have availed themselves very sparingly of these advantages. Even in history and geography, they made but small additions to the information already collected by Herodotus, Ctesias, and Xenophon, and this supercilious neglect of foreign literature has been the cause of depriving modern times of all records of the powerful and civilized nations which flourished while Greece was in a state of barbarism. Had the Macedonians

\* The Piracies of Scerdiliadas. POLYBIUS, v. 95.

or Romans treated the history and literature of Greece with the contempt which the Greeks shewed to the records of the Phœnicians, Persians, and Egyptians, it is not probable that any very extensive remains of later Greek literature would have reached us.\* At a period when the Arabs, after they had conquered the Syrian and Egyptian Greeks, neglected their language and their literature, the effects of such conduct were severely felt.

The munificence of the Ptolemies, the Seleucidæ, and the kings of Pergamus, soon enabled their capitals to eclipse the literary glory of the cities of Greece. The eminent men of Europe sought their fortunes abroad ; but while they transplanted their own genius, they could not transplant those circumstances which created and sustained it. In Egypt and in Syria, Greek literature lost its peculiar national character ; and that divine instinct in the portraiture of nature, which had been the charm and characteristic of its earlier age, never emigrated. This deficiency forms, indeed, the marked distinction between the literature of the Grecian and Macedonian periods ; and it was a natural consequence of the different situations held by literary men. Among the Asiatic and Alexandrine population, knowledge was confined to the higher classes, and literary productions were addressed to a public widely dispersed and dissimilar in many tastes and habits. The authors who addressed themselves to such a public could not escape a vagueness of expression on some

\* The general introduction of the Latin language as the official means of communication in the East, which, from the time of Caracalla, was almost universal, was not without its effect on Greek literature. Even Greek inscriptions of a public nature become rare after the time of Caracalla.

subjects, and an affectation of occult profundity on others. Learning and science, in so far as they could be rendered available for upholding literary renown, were most studiously cultivated, and most successfully employed; but deep feeling, warm enthusiasm, and simple truth, were, from the very nature of the case, impossible.

The frame of society in the earlier times had been very different in the free states of Greece. Literature and the fine arts then formed a portion of the usual education and ordinary life of every citizen in the state; they were consequently completely under the influence of public opinion, and received the impress of the national mind which they reflected from the mirror of genius. The effects of this popular character in Greek literature and art are evident, in the total freedom of all the productions of Greece, in her best days, from any thing that partakes of mannerism or exaggeration. The truer to nature any production could be rendered, which was to be offered to the attention of the people, the abler would they be to appreciate its merits, and their applause would be obtained with greater certainty; yet, at the same time, the farther the expression of nature could be removed from vulgarity, the higher would be the degree of general admiration. The sentiment necessary for the realization of ideal perfection, which modern civilization vainly requires from those who labour only for the polished and artificial classes of a society broken into sections, arose, in profusion, under the free instinct of the popular mind, to reverence simplicity and nature, when combined with beauty and dignity.

The connection of the Greeks with Assyria and Egypt, nevertheless, aided their progress in mathematics and scientific knowledge; yet astrology was the only new object of science which their Eastern studies added to the domain of the human intellect. From the time Berosus introduced astrology into Cos, it spread with inconceivable rapidity in Europe. It soon exercised a powerful influence over the religious opinions of the higher classes, naturally inclined to fatalism, and assisted in demoralizing the private and public character of the Greeks. From the Greeks it spread with additional empiricism among the Romans: it even maintained its ground against Christianity, with which it long strove to form an alliance, and it has only been extirpated in modern times.\* The Romans, as long as they clung to their national usages and religious feelings, endeavoured to resist the progress of a science so destructive to private and public virtue; but it embodied opinions which were rapidly gaining ground. In the time of the Cæsars, astrology was generally believed, and extensively practised.†

The general corruption of morals which followed from the Macedonian conquests, was the inevitable effect of the position in which mankind were every where placed. The accumulated treasures of the

\* Astrology was adopted by the Christians at an early period. St Antony was a believer in its scientific pretensions.

† The astrologers or Chaldeans, as they were called, were banished from Rome, A. D. 179. VALERIUS MAX. i. 3. 2. Tacitus recounts a remarkable instance of the superstition of Tiberius, accompanied by some very curious reflections of his own. *Annals*, vi. 20 — 22; see also, *Hist.* i. 22; and VITRUVIUS, ix. 7.

Persian empire, which must have amounted to between seventy and eighty millions sterling, were suddenly thrown into general circulation. The Greeks were generally enriched, and their position in society had been so frequently changed, that public opinion ceased to exercise a direct influence on private character. The mixture of Macedonians, Greeks, and natives, in the conquered countries of the East, was very incomplete, and they generally formed distinct classes of society; this circumstance alone contributed to weaken the feelings of moral responsibility, which are the most powerful preservatives of virtue. It is difficult to imagine a state of society more completely destitute of moral restraint than that in which the Asiatic Greeks lived. Public opinion was powerless to enforce even an outward respect for virtue; military accomplishments, talents for civil administration, and literary eminence, were the direct roads to distinction and wealth; honesty and virtue were very secondary qualities. In all countries or societies where a class becomes predominant, a conventional character is formed, according to the exigencies of the case, as the standard of an honourable man; and it is usually very different, indeed, from what is really necessary to constitute a virtuous, or even an honest citizen.

With regard to the European Greeks, high rank at the Asiatic courts was often suddenly, and, indeed, accidentally placed within their reach, by qualities that had in general only been cultivated as a means of obtaining a livelihood. It is not, therefore, wonderful, that wealth and power, obtained under such

circumstances, should have been wasted in luxury, and squandered in the gratification of lawless passions. Yet, in spite of the complaints most justly recorded in history against the luxury, idleness, avarice, and debauchery of the Greeks, it seems surprising that the national character resisted, so effectually as it did, the powerful means at work to accomplish its ruin. There never existed a people more perfectly at liberty to gratify every passion. During two hundred and fifty years, the Greeks were the dominant class in Asia; and the corrupting influence of this predominance was extended to the whole frame of society, in their European, as well as their Asiatic possessions. The history of the Achæan League, and the endeavours of Agis and Cleomenes to restore the ancient institutions of Sparta, prove that public and private virtue were still admired and appreciated by the native Greeks. The Romans, who were the loudest in condemning and satirizing the vices of the Greek nation, proved far less able to resist the allurements of wealth and power; and in the course of one century, their demoralization far exceeded the corruption of the Greeks. The severe tone in which Polybius animadverts on the vices of his countrymen, must always be contrasted with the picture of Roman depravity in the pages of Suetonius and Tacitus, in order to form a correct estimate of the moral position of the two nations. The Greeks afford a sad spectacle of the debasing influence of wealth and power on the higher classes; but the Romans, after their Asiatic conquests, present the loathsome picture of a whole people throwing aside all moral restraint, and openly

wallowing in those vices which the higher classes elsewhere have generally striven to conceal.\*

The religion of the Greeks was little more than a section of the political constitution of the state. The power of religion depended on custom. Strictly speaking, therefore, the Greeks never possessed any thing more than a national form of worship, and their religious feelings produced no very important influence on their moral conduct. The conquests of Alexander effected as great a change in religion as in manners. The Greeks willingly adopted the superstitious practices of the conquered nations, and, without hesitation, paid their devotions at the shrines of foreign divinities; but, strange to say, they never appear to have profoundly investigated, either the metaphysical opinions, or the religious doctrines, of the Eastern nations. They treated with neglect the pure theism of Moses, and the sublime religious system of Zoroaster, while they cultivated a knowledge of the astrology, necromancy, and sorcery of the Chaldæans, Syrians, and Egyptians.

The separation of the higher and lower ranks of society, which only commenced among the Greeks after their Asiatic conquests, produced a marked effect on the religious ideas of the nation. Among the wealthy and the learned, indifference to all religions rapidly gained ground. The philosophical speculations of Alexander's age tended towards scepticism, and the state of mankind, in the following century, afforded practical proofs to the ancients of

\* *Romans*, chap. i. ver. 26 — 32. JUVENAL, TACITUS, and LUCIAN, are full of illustrations.

the insufficiency of virtue and reason to ensure happiness and success either in public or private life. The consequence was, that the greater number embraced the belief in a blind overruling destiny, — while a few became atheists. The absurdities of popular paganism had been exposed and ridiculed, while its mythology had not yet been explained by philosophical allegories. No system of philosophy, on the other hand, had sought to enforce its moral truths among the people, by declaring the principle of responsibility. The lower orders were without philosophy; the higher, without religion.

This separation in the feelings and opinions of the different ranks of society, rendered the value of public opinion comparatively insignificant to the philosophers; and consequently, their doctrines were no longer addressed to the popular mind. The education of the lower orders, which had always depended on the public lessons they had received from voluntary teachers, in the public places of resort, was henceforward neglected; and the priests of the temples, the diviners and soothsayers, became their instructors and guides. Under such guidance, the old mythological fables and the new wonders of the Eastern magicians, were employed as the surest means of rendering the superstitious feelings of the people, and the popular dread of supernatural influences, a source of profit to the priesthood.\* While the educated became the votaries of Chaldæans and

\* APULEIUS, *Metam.* viii. p. 571.



astrologers, the ignorant were the admirers of Egyptians and conjurers.\*

The Greek nation, immediately before the conquest of the Romans, was rich both in wealth and numbers. Alexander had thrown the accumulated treasures of centuries into circulation; the dismemberment of his empire prevented his successors from draining the various countries of the world, to expend their resources on a single city. The number of capitals and independent cities in the Grecian world kept money in circulation, and enabled trade to flourish, and the Greek population to increase. The elements of national prosperity are so various and complex, that a knowledge of the numbers of a people affords no certain criterion for estimating their wealth and happiness; still, if it were possible to obtain accurate accounts of the population of all the countries inhabited by the Greeks after the death of Alexander, such knowledge would afford better means of estimating the real progress or decline of social civilization, than either the records which history has preserved of the results of wars and negotiations, or than the memorials of art and literature. The population of Greece, as of every other country, must have varied very much at different periods; even the proportion of the slave to the free inhabitants can never have long remained exactly the same. We are, unfortunately, so completely ignorant of the relative density of the Greek

\* LUCIAN'S *Alexander*, and the *Life of Apollonius Tyaneus*, by PHILOSTRATUS, belong to a much later period, but they afford the means of illustrating this subject.

population at different periods, and so well assured that its absolute numbers depended on many causes which it is now impossible to appreciate fully, that it would be a vain endeavour to attempt to fix the period when the Greek race was most numerous. The empire of the Greeks was most extensive during the century which elapsed immediately after the death of Alexander; but it would be unsafe to draw, from that single fact, any certain conclusion concerning the numbers of the Greek race at that period, as compared with the following century.

The fallacy of any inferences concerning the population of ancient times, which are drawn from the numbers of the inhabitants in modern times, is apparent — when we reflect on the rapid increase of mankind, in the greater part of Europe, in late years. Gibbon estimates the population of the Roman empire, in the time of Claudius, at one hundred and twenty millions, and he supposed modern Europe to contain, at the time he wrote, one hundred and seven millions.\* Seventy years have not yet elapsed, and yet the countries which he enumerated have upwards of two hundred and ten millions.† The variations which have taken place in the numbers of the Jews at different periods, illustrate the vicissitudes to which an expatriated population, like a large portion of the Greek nation, is always liable. The Jews have often been far less—perhaps they have been frequently more numerous—than they are at present, yet their numbers now seem to equal what they were at the era of the greatest wealth,

\* *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, i. 68. in 1776.

† See the tables of population in the *Almanach de Gotha*.

power, and glory of their nation under Solomon.\* A very judicious writer has estimated the population of continental Greece, Peloponnesus, and the Ionian Islands, at three millions and a half, during the period which elapsed from the Persian wars to the death of Alexander.† Now, if we admit a similar density of population in Crete, Cyprus, the islands of the Archipelago, and the colonies on the coasts of Thrace and Asia Minor, this number would require to be more than doubled. The population of European Greece seems to have declined after the time of Alexander. Money became more abundant; it was easy for a Greek to make his fortune abroad; increased wealth augmented the wants of the free citizens, and the smaller states became incapable of supporting as large a population as in earlier times, when wants were fewer, and emigration difficult. The size of properties, and the number of slaves, therefore, increased. The small diminution which had taken place in the population of Greece must, however, have been trifling, when compared with the

\* The census of David (2 *Samuel*, xxiv. 9) shews that the Jews were then about five millions. The immense riches of Solomon, (*Kings*, i. 10, 14, 22,) who must have had about two millions sterling of annual revenue, and the present population of Malta and Guernsey, which is proportionally greater, render this neither improbable nor miraculous. In the time of our Saviour the Jews were very numerous, and very widely dispersed, and had already lost their own language, and adopted that of the countries they inhabited, *Acts*, ii. 9. The Greeks were always more tenacious of their language. See also JOSEPHUS, *Ant.* XIV. vii. 2.

† FYNES CLINTON, *Fasti Hellenici*, ii. 386. But the extreme uncertainty of all calculations about populations in ancient times is evident from a comparison of the various opinions of Boeckh and Letronne concerning the population of Attica; of Brottier, Gibbon, and Dureau de la Malle concerning that of Rome. With regard to the population of Attica, Boeckh makes it 500,000. Letronne only 220,000. See LEAKE'S *Topography of Athens and Attica*, 2 vols. 1840.

immense increase in the Greek population of Asia and Egypt; and in Magna Græcia, Sicily, and Cyrene, the number of the Greeks had not decreased.\* Greek civilization had extended itself from the banks of the Indus to the pillars of Hercules, and from the shores of the Palus Mæotis to the island of Dioscorides. It may therefore be admitted, that the Greeks were, at no earlier period of their history, more numerous than at the time the Romans commenced the subjugation of the countries which they ruled.

The history of the Greeks under the Roman domination tends to correct the opinion, that national changes are to be solely attributed to those remarkable occurrences which alone find a place in the annals of states. It not unfrequently happened, that those events, which produced the greatest change on the fortunes of the Romans, exerted no very important or permanent influence on the fate of the Greeks; while, on the other hand, some change in the state of India, Bactria, Ethiopia, or Arabia, by altering the direction of commerce, powerfully influenced their prosperity and future

\* Cicero furnishes data for framing a calculation of the numbers of the population in Sicily in his time. They seem to have been about two millions, say, 1,200,000.—*Economie politique des Romains*, par DUREAU DE LA MALLE, ii. 380. We possess likewise exact information concerning the army and revenues of Ptolemy Philadelphus, (B. C. 245.) His kingdom embraced Egypt, Cyrenaica, Cæle-Syria, Phœnicia, Cyprus, Caria, Lycia, Pamphylia, and Cilicia. His army consisted of 200,000 infantry, 20,000 cavalry, 2000 war chariots, and 400 elephants. His fleet, of 1500 galleys of war, and 1000 ships of transport. The annual revenues of his kingdom were 14,800 talents, or L.2,500,000 in money, and 1,500,000 artabas, or five million bushels of wheat paid in kind. His treasury was said to contain seven hundred and forty thousand talents, or above one hundred millions sterling.—*Egypt under the Ptolemies*, by SAMUEL SHARPE, p. 94.

destinies. The object of the following pages is to trace the great changes which took place in the Greek nation, from the period of the subjection of Greece by the Romans, to that of the conquest of the semi-Greek provinces which had belonged to the Macedonian empire, by the Saracens. The history of mankind requires a more accurate illustration than has yet been undertaken, of the causes of the general degradation of all the political governments with which we are acquainted, during this eventful period ; but the task belongs to universal history. To obtain a correct view of the social condition of the European nations in the darkest periods of the middle ages, it is necessary to examine society through a Greek as well as a Roman medium, and to weigh the experience and the passions of the East against the force and the prejudices of the West. It will then be found, that many germs of that civilization which seemed to have arisen in the dark ages as a natural development of society, were really borrowed from the Greek people and the Byzantine empire.

SECTION I. — IMMEDIATE CAUSES OF THE CONQUEST OF  
GREECE BY THE ROMANS.

THE great difference which existed in the social condition of the Greeks and Romans during the whole of their national existence, must be kept in view, in order to form a just idea of their relative position when ruled by the same government. The Romans formed a nation with the organization of a single city ; their political government, always par-

taking of its municipal origin, was a type of concentration in administrative power, and was enabled to pursue its objects with undeviating steadiness of purpose. The Greeks were a people composed of a number of rival states, whose attention was incessantly diverted to various objects. The great end of existence among the Romans was war; they were the children of Mars, and they revered their progenitor with the most fervent enthusiasm. Agriculture itself was only honoured from necessity. Among the Greeks, civil virtues were called into action by the multifarious exigencies of society, and were honoured and deified by the nation. Linked together by an international system of independent states, the Greeks regarded war as a means of obtaining some definite object, in accordance with the established balance of power. A state of peace was, in their view, the natural state of mankind. The Romans regarded war as their permanent occupation; their national and individual ambition was exclusively directed to conquest. The subjection of their enemies, or a perpetual struggle for supremacy, was the only alternative that war presented to their minds.

The success of the Roman arms, and the conquest of Greece, were the natural results of concentrated national feelings, and superior military organization, contending with an ill cemented political league, and an inferior military system. The Roman was instructed to regard himself merely as a component part of the republic, and to view Rome as placed in opposition to the rest of mankind. The Greek, though he possessed the moral feeling of nationality

quite as powerfully as the Roman, could not concentrate equal political energy. The Greeks, after the period of the Macedonian conquests, occupied the double position of members of a widely spread and dominant people, and of citizens of independent states. Their minds were enlarged by this extension of their sphere of civilization; but what they gained in general feelings of philanthropy, they appear to have lost in patriotic attachment to the interest of their native states.

It would be a vain exercise of ingenuity to speculate on the course of events, and on the progress of civilization in the ancient world, had the national spirit of Greece been awakened in her struggle with Rome, and the war between the two peoples involved the question of Greek nationality, as well as political independence. On the one hand, Greece and Rome might be supposed existing as rival states, mutually aiding the progress of mankind by their emulation; on the other, the extinction of the Greek people, as well as the destruction of their political government, might be regarded as a not improbable event. No strong national feeling was, however, raised in Greece by the wars with Rome, and the contest remained only a political one in the eyes of the people; consequently, even if the military power of the belligerents had been more nearly balanced than it really was, the struggle could hardly have terminated in any other way than by the subjugation of the Greeks.

The facility with which the Greeks accommodated themselves to the Roman sway, and the rapidity with which they sank into political insignificance, it seems at first sight more difficult to explain, than the

ease with which they were vanquished in the field. The fact, however, is undeniable, that the conquest was generally viewed with satisfaction by the great body of the inhabitants of Greece, who considered the destruction of the numerous small independent governments in the country, as a necessary step towards improving their own condition. The political constitutions even of the most democratic states of Greece, excluded so large a portion of the inhabitants from all share in the public administration, that the majority looked with indifference on the loss of their independence, when that loss appeared to ensure a permanent state of peace. Greece had arrived at that period of civilization, when political questions were determined by financial reasons, and the hope of a diminution of the public burdens was a powerful argument in favour of submission to Rome. When the Romans conquered Macedonia, they fixed the tribute at one half the amount which had been paid to the Macedonian kings.

At the period of the Roman conquest, public opinion had been vitiated, as well as weakened, by the power and corrupt influence of the Asiatic monarchies. Many of the Greek princes employed large sums in purchasing the military services and civic flatteries of the free states. The political and military leaders throughout Greece, were thus, by means of foreign alliances, rendered masters of resources far beyond what the unassisted revenues of the free states could have placed at their disposal. It soon became evident, that the fate of many of the free states depended on their alliances with the kings of Macedonia, Egypt, Syria, and Pergamus ;



and the citizens could not avoid the despairing conclusion, that no exertion, on their part, could have any decisive influence on the tranquillity of Greece. They could only increase their own taxes, and bring to their own homes all the miseries of a most inhuman system of warfare. This state of public affairs caused the despair which induced the Acarnanians \* and the citizens of Abydos † to adopt the heroic resolution, not to survive the loss of their independence; but its more general effect was, to spread public and private demoralization through all ranks of society. Peace alone, to the reflecting Greeks, seemed capable of restoring security of property, and of re-establishing due respect for the principles of justice; and peace seemed only attainable by submission to the Romans. The continuation of a state of war, which was rapidly consuming the resources of the land, was regarded by the independent Greeks as a far greater evil than the acknowledgment of the Roman supremacy. So ardently was the termination of the contest desired by the great body of the people, that a common proverb, expressive of a wish that the Romans might speedily prevail, was every where current. "Unless we are quickly lost, we cannot be saved." ‡

It was some time before the Greeks had great reason to regret their fortune. A combination of causes, which could hardly have entered into the calculations of any politician, enabled them to preserve their national institutions, and to exercise all their former social influence, even after the annihila-

\* LIVY, xxvi. 25.

† POLYBIUS, xvi. 32.

‡ *Ibid.* xl. 5. 12.

tion of their political existence. The vanity of the Greeks was flattered by the admitted superiority of their nation in arts and literature, and by the respect paid to their usages and prejudices by the Romans. Their political subjection was, at first, not very burdensome; and a considerable portion of the nation was allowed to retain the appearance of independence. Athens and Sparta were honoured with the title of allies of Rome. The nationality of the Greeks was so interwoven with their municipal institutions, that the Romans found it impossible to abolish the local administration; and an imperfect attempt, made at the time of the conquest of Achæa, was soon abandoned. The local institutions ultimately modified the Roman administration itself, and long before the Roman empire ceased to exist, its political authority in the East was guided by the feelings of the Greeks, and its forms moulded according to Greek customs.

The social rank which the Greeks held in the eyes of their conquerors at the time of their subjection, is not to be overlooked. The bulk of the Greek population in Europe consisted of landed proprietors, occupying a position which would have given some rank in Roman society. No class precisely similar existed at Rome, where all that did not belong to the senate, the aristocracy, or the administration, were of no account; for the people always remained an inferior grade.\* Indeed, the higher classes at Rome always felt either contempt or hostility towards the populace of the city; and even when

\* The tribune Philip asserted, that there were not 2000 Roman citizens proprietors of land. CICERO, *De Offic.* ii. 21.

the emperors were induced to favour the people, from a wish to depress the great families of the aristocracy, they were unable to efface the general feeling of contempt with which the people were regarded. To the Greeks,—who had always maintained a higher social position, not only in Europe, but also in the kingdoms of the Seleucidæ and the Ptolemies,—that position was conceded by the Roman aristocracy, as it awakened no feelings either of hostility or jealousy.

#### SECTION II. — TREATMENT OF GREECE AFTER ITS CONQUEST.

THE Romans generally commenced by treating their provinces with mildness. The government of Sicily was arranged on a basis which certainly did not augment the burdens on the inhabitants. The tribute imposed on Macedonia was less than the amount of taxation which she had paid to her own kings; and there is no reason for supposing, that the burdens of the Greeks, whose country was embraced in the province of Achæa, were increased by the conquest. The local municipal administration of the separate cities was allowed to exist, but in order to enforce submission more readily, their constitutions were modified by fixing a census, which restricted the franchise in the democratic commonwealths.\* Many of the smaller states were long allowed to retain their own political government, and some were ranked as allies of the

\* PAUSANIAS, vii. 16. 6.

republic. It is impossible to trace the changes which the Romans gradually effected in the financial and administrative condition of Greece, with chronological precision. Facts, often separated by a long series of years, require to be gleaned; and caution must be used in attributing to them their just influence on the state of society. The Roman senate was evidently not without great jealousy and some fear of the Greeks, and great prudence was displayed in adopting a number of measures, by which they were gradually weakened, and cautiously broken to the yoke of their conquerors. This caution proves that the despair of the Achæans had produced a considerable effect on the Romans, who perceived that the Greek nation, if roused to a general combination, possessed the means of offering a determined and dangerous resistance. It was not until after the time of Augustus, when the conquest of every portion of the Greek nation had been completed, that the Romans began to view the Greeks in the contemptible light in which they are represented by the writers of the capital. Crete was not reduced into the form of a province until about eight years after the subjection of Achæa, and its conquest was with difficulty effected, after a war of three years, by the presence of a consular army. The resistance it offered was so obstinate, that it was almost depopulated ere the Romans could complete their conquest.\*

No attempt was made to introduce uniformity into the general government of the Grecian states;

\* B. C. 67. FREINSHEIM, *Supp. Liv.* xcix. 47.

any such plan, indeed, would have been contrary to the principles of the Roman government, which had never aspired at establishing unity even in the administration of Italy. The attention of the Romans was directed to the means of ruling their various conquests in the most efficient manner, of concentrating all the military power in their own hands, and of levying the greatest amount of tribute which circumstances would permit. Thus, numerous cities in Greece, possessing but a very small territory, as Delphi, Thespiæ, Tanagra, Elataæ, and Aleæ, were allowed to retain that degree of independence which secured to them the privilege of being governed by their own laws and usages, so late even as the times of the emperors. Rhodes also long preserved its own government as a free state,\* though it was as completely dependent on Rome, as the state of the Ionian Islands now is on Great Britain. The Romans adopted no theoretical principles which required them to enforce uniformity in the geographical divisions, or in the administrative arrangements of the provinces of their empire, particularly where local habits or laws opposed a barrier to any practical union.

The Roman government, however, soon adopted measures tending to diminish the resources of the Greek states when received as allies of the republic. We are informed by Diodorus, that in consequence of the tyranny of the collectors of the tribute in Sicily, numbers of free citizens were reduced to slavery.†

\* TACITUS, *Ann.* xii. 58. The precise privileges of *autonomia* in the Roman empire do not appear to be exactly determined.

† DIOD. SIC. xxxvi. 1.

These slaves were sold even within the dominions of the king of Bithynia. This conduct of the Romans produced an extensive insurrection of the slaves; and cotemporary with a seditious rising in Sicily, there occurred also a great rebellion of the slaves employed in the silver mines of Attica.\* The Attic slaves seized the fortified town of Sunium, and committed extensive ravages before the government of Athens was able to overpower them. It is so natural for slaves to rebel when a favourable occasion presents itself, that it is hazardous to look beyond ordinary causes for any explanation of this insurrection, particularly as the declining state of the silver mines of Laurium, at this period, rendered the slaves less valuable, and would cause them to be worse treated, and more negligently guarded. Still the simultaneous rebellion of slaves, in these two distant Greek countries, seems not unconnected with the measures of the Roman government towards its subjects.

If we could place implicit faith in the testimony of so firm and partial an adherent of the Romans as Polybius, we must believe, that the Roman administration was at first characterized by a love of justice, and that the Roman magistrates were far less venal than the Greeks. If the Greeks, he says, are intrusted with a single talent of public money, though they give written security, and though legal witnesses be present, they will never act honestly; but if the largest sums be confided to the Romans engaged in the public service, their honourable conduct is secured simply by an oath.† Under such

\* *ATHENÆUS*, vi. 104.

† *POLYBIUS*, vi. 56. 13.

circumstances, the people must have appreciated highly the advantages of the Roman domination, and contrasted the last years of their troubled and doubtful independence, with the just and peaceful government of Rome, in a manner extremely favourable to their new masters. Less than a century of irresponsible power effected a wonderful change in the conduct of the Roman magistrates. Cicero declares, that the senate made a traffic of justice to the provincials. There is nothing so holy, that it cannot be violated, nothing so strong, that it cannot be destroyed by money, are his words.\* But as the government of Rome grew more oppressive, and the amount of the taxes levied on the provinces was more severely exacted, the increased power of the republic rendered any rebellion of the Greeks utterly hopeless. The complete separation in the administration of the various provinces, governed like so many separate kingdoms, viceroyalties, or pashalics, the preservation of a distinct local government in each of the allied kingdoms and free states, rendered the management of each capable of modification, without any compromise of the general system of the republic; and this admirable fitness of its administration to the exigencies of the times, remained an attribute of the Roman state for many centuries. Each state in Greece, continuing in possession of as much of its peculiar political constitution as was compatible with the supremacy and fiscal views of a foreign conqueror, retained all its former jealousies towards its neighbours, and its

\* *In Verrem*. 1. 2.

interests were likely to be as often compromised by disputes with the surrounding Greek states as with the Roman government. Prudence and local interests would every where favour submission to Rome; national vanity alone would whisper incitements to venture on a struggle for independence.

### SECTION III.—EFFECTS OF THE MITHRIDATIC WAR ON THE STATE OF GREECE.

WHEN Mithridates had driven the Romans out of Asia, he sent a large army into Greece, with the hope of being enabled, by the occupation of that country, to carry the war into Italy. The Greeks, in general, did not take much interest in the contest; they viewed it as a struggle for supremacy between the Romans and the king of Pontus; and public opinion favoured the former, as likely to prove the milder and more equitable masters. Many of the leading men in Greece, and the governments of most of those states which retained their independence, inclined to the cause of Mithridates. Some Lacedæmonian and Achæan troops joined his army, and Athens engaged heartily in his party. As soon, however, as Sylla appeared in Greece with his army, every state hastened to submit to Rome, with the exception of the Athenians, who appear to have had some particular cause of dissatisfaction at this time.\* The vanity of the Athenians, puffed up

\* ZINKEISEN, *Geschichte Griechenlands*, 497. n. 1. ATHENÆUS, v. 48. In mentioning Zinkeisen's excellent work, it is impossible not to add a regret, that the second volume is not yet published. Zinkeisen was the first who conceived the idea of writing a complete history of Greece.



by constant allusions to their ancient fame, induced them to engage in a direct contest with the whole force of Rome. They were commanded by a democrat called Aristion; the Roman legions were led by Sylla. The exclusive vanity of the Athenians, while it cherished in their hearts a more ardent love of liberty than had survived in the rest of Greece, blinded them to their own insignificance when compared with the belligerents into whose quarrel they rashly thrust themselves. But, though they rushed precipitantly into the war, they conducted themselves in it with great constancy. Sylla was compelled to besiege Athens in person; and the defence of the city was conducted with such courage and obstinacy, that the task of subduing it proved one of great difficulty to a Roman army, even when commanded by that celebrated warrior. When the defence grew hopeless, the Athenians sent a deputation to Sylla to open negotiations; but when the orator began to recount the glories of their ancestors at Marathon, as an argument for mercy, the proud Roman cut short the discussion with the remark, that his country had sent him to Athens to punish rebels, not to study history.\* Athens was at last taken by assault, but it was treated by Sylla with unnecessary cruelty; the rapine of the troops was encouraged, instead of being checked, by their general. The majority of the citizens was slain; the carnage was so fearfully great, as to become memorable even in that age of

\* PLUTARCH, *Sylla*. Marathon has proved a sad stumbling-block to Greek rhetoricians, from the time of Plato down to the days of the logiotati. 'Ενι μάχῃ δὲ ἡ Μαγαδών καὶ ἡ Κωνίρυτος, αἳ οὐκ αἶν ἐνὶ ἀνδρὶ γίνεσθαι. LUCIAN, *Rhetor. Præcep.* 18.

bloodshed; the private moveable property was seized by the soldiery, and Sylla assumed some merit to himself for not committing the rifled houses to the flames. He declared that he saved the city from destruction, and allowed Athens to continue to exist, only on account of its ancient glory. He carried off some of the columns of the temple of Jupiter Olympius to ornament Rome; but as that temple was in an unfinished state, and he inflicted no injury on any public building, it seems probable that he only removed materials which were ready for transport, without any intention of insulting or robbing Athens. The fate of the Piræus, which he utterly destroyed, was more severe than that of Athens. From Sylla's campaign in Greece, the commencement of the ruin and depopulation of the country is to be dated. The destruction of property caused by his ravages in Attica was so great, that Athens from that time lost its commercial, as well as its political importance. The race of Athenian citizens was almost extirpated, and a new population, composed of a heterogeneous mass of settlers, received the right of citizenship.\* Still the vitality of Greek institutions inspired the altered body; the ancient forms and laws continued to exist in their former purity, and the Areopagus is mentioned by Tacitus, in the reign of Tiberius, as nobly disregarding the powerful protection of Piso, who strove to influence its decisions, and corrupt the administration of justice.

Athens was not the only city in Greece which

\* TACITUS, *Ann.* ii. 55.

suffered severely from the cruelty and rapacity of Sylla. After he had defeated Archelaus, the general of Mithridates, at Cheronea, he deprived Thebes of half its territory, which he consecrated to Apollo and Jupiter. The administration of the temporal affairs of the pagan deities, was not so wisely conducted as the civil business of the municipalities. The Theban territory declined in wealth and population, and in the time of Pausanias the Cadmea or citadel was the only inhabited portion of ancient Thebes. Both parties, during the Mithridatic war, inflicted severe injuries on Greece, plundered the country, and destroyed property most wantonly, while many of the losses were never repaired. The foundations of national prosperity were undermined; and it henceforward became impossible to save, from the annual consumption of the inhabitants, the sums necessary to replace the accumulated capital of ages, which this short war had annihilated. In some cases the wealth of the communities became insufficient to keep the existing public works in repair.

#### SECTION IV.—RUIN OF THE COUNTRY BY THE PIRATES OF CILICIA.

THE Greeks, far from continuing to enjoy tranquillity under the powerful protection of Rome, soon found themselves exposed to the attacks of every enemy, against whom the policy of their masters did not require the employment of a regular army. The caution of the senate did not allow the provinces

to maintain any armed force ; and the guards whom the free cities were permitted to keep, were barely sufficient to protect the walls of their citadels. Bands of robbers, and fleets of pirates, remains of the mercenary forces of the Asiatic monarchs, and disbanded in consequence of the Roman victories, began to infest the coasts of Greece. As long as the provinces continued able to pay their taxes with regularity, and the trade of Rome did not suffer directly, little attention was paid to the sufferings of the Greeks.

The geographical configuration of European Greece, intersected, in every direction, by high and rugged mountains, and separated, by deep gulfs and bays, into a number of promontories and peninsulas, renders communication between the thickly peopled and fertile districts, more difficult than in most other regions. The country opposes barriers to internal trade, and presents difficulties to the formation of plans of mutual defence between the different districts, which it requires care and judgment, on the part of the general government, to remove. The armed force that can instantly be collected at one point, must often be small; and this circumstance has marked out Greece as a suitable field where piratical bands may plunder, as they have it in their power to remove their forces to distant spots with great celerity. From the earliest ages of history to the present day, these circumstances, combined with the extensive trade which has always been carried on in the eastern part of the Mediterranean, have rendered the Grecian seas the scene of constant piracies. At many periods, the pirates have been

able to assemble forces, sufficient to give their expeditions the character of regular war; and their pursuits have been so lucrative, and their success so great, that their profession has ceased to be viewed as a dishonourable occupation.\*

A system of piracy, which was carried on by considerable armies and large fleets, began to be formed soon after the conclusion of the Mithridatic war. The indefinite nature of the Roman power in the East, the weakness of the Asiatic monarchs, and of the sovereigns of Egypt, the questionable nature of the protection which Rome accorded to her allies, and the general disarming of the European Greeks, all encouraged and facilitated the enterprises of these pirates. A political, as well as a military organization, was given to their forces, by the seizure of several strong positions on the coast of Cilicia. From these stations they directed their expeditions over the greater part of the Mediterranean.† The immense wealth, which ages of prosperity had accumulated in the small towns and numerous temples of Greece, was now defenceless; the country was exposed to daily incursions, and a long list of the devastations of the Cilician pirates is recorded in history. Many even of the largest and wealthiest cities in Europe and Asia were successfully attacked and plundered, and the greater number of the celebrated temples of anti-

\* Piracy flourished before the time of Homer, and it had some flattering reminiscences in the days of Tournefort. It is said that the piracies committed during the late revolutionary war, contributed quite as much as the humanity of the allies, to the signature of the treaty of the 6th of July, 1827, and to the foundation of a German monarchy in Greece.

† APPIAN, *De Bello*, M. 92. 3. PLUTARCH, *Pompey*, 24.

quity were robbed of their immense treasures. Samos, Clazomene, and Samothrace, the great temples at Hermione, Epidaurus, Tænarus, Calauria, Actium, Argos, and the Isthmus of Corinth, were all pillaged. To such an extent was this system of robbery carried, and so powerful and well-disciplined were the forces of the pirates, that it was at last necessary for Rome either to share the world with them, or to devote all her military energies to their destruction. In order to carry on war with this band,—the last remains of the mercenaries who had upheld the Macedonian empire in the East,—Pompey was invested with extraordinary powers as commander-in-chief over the whole Mediterranean. An immense force was placed at his absolute disposal, and he was charged with a degree of authority over the officers of the republic, and the allies of the state, which had never before been intrusted to one individual. His success in the execution of this commission, was considered one of his most brilliant military achievements; he captured ninety ships with brazen beaks, and took twenty thousand prisoners. Some of these prisoners were established in towns on the coast of Cilicia; and Soli, which he rebuilt, and peopled with these warriors, was honoured with the name of Pompeiopolis. The Romans, consequently, do not seem to have regarded these pirates as having engaged in a disgraceful warfare.

Crete had been filled with the strongholds of the pirates as well as Cilicia, and there is no doubt, that the greater number consisted of Greeks. Despair is said to have driven many of the citizens of the

states conquered by the Romans to suicide; it must certainly have forced a far greater number to embrace a life of piracy and robbery. The government of Rome was at this time subject to continual revolutions; and in the disorders produced by the civil wars, the Romans lost all respect for the rights of property, either at home or abroad. Wealth and power were the only objects of pursuit, and the force of all moral ties was broken. Justice ceased to be administered, and men, in such cases, always assume the right of revenging their own wrongs. Those who considered themselves aggrieved by any act of oppression, or fancied they had received some severe injury, sought revenge in the way which presented itself most readily; and when the oppressor was secure against their attacks, they made society responsible. The state of public affairs, even in the districts of Greece, which had suffered from the ravages of the pirates, was considered an apology for their conduct. They probably spent liberally among the poor the treasures which they wrested from the rich; and so little, indeed, were they placed beyond the pale of society, that Pompey himself settled a colony of them at Dyme, in Achæa, where they seem to have prospered. Though piracy was not subsequently carried on so extensively as to merit a place in history, it was not entirely extirpated even by the fleet which the Roman emperors maintained in the East; and that cases still continued to occur in the Grecian seas is proved by public inscriptions.\*

\* БОРЕКН. *Corpus Inscript. Græcarum*. Nos. 2335 and 2347, and an inscription in the possession of Mr Gavrios of Amorgos. *Act. Societ. Gr. Lips. Fasc. III.*

SECTION V.—NATURE OF THE ROMAN PROVINCIAL  
ADMINISTRATION IN GREECE.

THE Romans reduced those countries, where they met with resistance, into the form of provinces, a procedure which was generally equivalent to abrogating the existing laws, and imposing on the vanquished a new system of civil, as well as political administration. In the countries inhabited by the Greeks, this policy underwent considerable modification. The Greeks, indeed, were so much farther advanced in civilization than the Romans, that it was no easy task for a Roman pro-consul to draw up the edict declaring the principles on which his decisions were to be based, and the forms of proceeding which he intended to adopt in his government, without borrowing largely from the existing laws of the province. The constitution of Sicily, which was the first Greek province of the Roman dominions, presents a number of anomalies in the administration of its different districts. That portion of the island which had composed the kingdom of Hiero, was allowed to retain its own laws, and paid the Romans the same amount of taxation which had been formerly levied by its own monarchs. The other portions of the island were subjected to various regulations concerning the amount of their taxes, and the administration of justice. The province contained three allied cities, five colonies, five free, and seventeen tributary cities.\* Macedonia, Epirus, and Achæa,

\* PLINY, *Hist. Nat.* iii. 14. *Economie Politique des Romains*, par DUREAU DE LA MALLE. ii. 353.



when conquered, were treated very much in the same way, if we make due allowance for the increasing severity of the fiscal government of the Roman magistrates. Crete, Cyprus, and Asia Minor, were subsequently reduced to provinces, and were allowed to retain much of their laws and usages. Scævola, in his edict, permitted the Greeks of his province to decide their legal differences according to their own laws, and Cicero adopted the same provision.\* Thrace, even so late as the time of Tiberius, was governed by its own sovereign, as an ally of the Romans.† Many cities within the bounds of the provinces retained their own peculiar laws, and as far as their own citizens were concerned, they continued to possess the legislative, as well as the executive power, by administering their own affairs, and executing justice within their limits, without being liable to the control of the proconsul.‡

As long as the republic continued to exist, the provinces were administered by proconsuls or prætors, chosen from among the members of the senate, and responsible to that body for their administration. The power of these provincial governors was immense; the supreme control over the judicial, financial, and administrative business, was vested in their hands. They had the right of naming and removing most of the judges and magistrates under their orders, and most of the fiscal arrangements regarding the provincials, depended on their will. No power ever existed more liable to be abused; for while the

\* CICERO, *Ep. ad Att.* vi. 1.

† LIVY, xlv. 34.

‡ PLINY the Younger, *Ep.* x. 56. 88.

representatives of the most absolute sovereigns have seldom been intrusted with more extensive authority, they have never incurred so little danger of being punished for its abuse. The only tribunal before which the proconsuls could be cited for any acts of injustice which they might commit, was that very senate which had sent them out as its deputies, and received them back into its body as members.

When the imperial government was consolidated by Augustus, the command of the whole military force of the republic devolved on the emperor; but his constitutional position was not that of sovereign. The early emperors concentrated in their persons the offices of commander-in-chief of the military and naval forces of Rome, of minister of war and of finance, and of Pontifex Maximus, which gave them a sacred character, as head of the religion of the state; but the senate and people were still possessed of the supreme legislative authority, and the senate continued to direct the civil branches of the executive administration. In consequence of this relation between the jurisdiction of the senate and the emperors, the provinces were divided into two classes: Those in which the military forces were stationed, were placed under the direct orders of the emperor, and were governed by his lieutenants or prætors: the other provinces, which did not require to be constantly occupied by the legions, remained dependent on the senate, as the chief civil authority in the state; they were called provinces of the people, and were usually governed by proconsuls. Most of the countries inhabited by the Greeks, were in that peaceable condition, which placed them in the rank

of proconsular provinces. Sicily, Macedonia, Epirus, Achæa, Crete, Bithynia, and Asia Minor, were thus put under the control of the senate. Cyprus, from its situation, as affording a convenient post for a military force to watch Cilicia, Syria, and Egypt, was at first classed among the imperial provinces; but Augustus subsequently exchanged it for the more important position of Dalmatia, where an army could be stationed to watch Rome, and separate Italy and the proconsular provinces of Greece.

The proconsuls occupied a higher rank in the state than the imperial prætors; the splendour of their courts, and the numerous train by which they were attended, were maintained at the expense of their provinces. Their situation deprived them of all hope of military distinction, the highest object of Roman ambition. This exclusion of the aristocracy from military pursuits, by the emperors, is not to be lost sight of in observing the change which took place in the Roman character. Avarice was the vice which succeeded to stifle their feelings of self-abasement and disappointed ambition; and as the proconsuls were not objects of jealousy to the emperors, they were enabled to gratify their ruling passion without danger. As they were created from among the senate in succession, they felt assured of finding favourable judges under any circumstances. Irresponsible government soon degenerates into tyranny; the administration of the Roman proconsuls soon became as oppressive as that of the worst despots, and was loudly complained of by the provincials. The provinces under the government of the emperor were better administered. The imperial lieutenants were inferior in

rank to proconsuls, but they possessed a more extensive command, as they united in their persons the chief civil and military authority. The effect of their possessing more power was, that the limits of their authority, and the forms of their proceedings, were determined with greater precision — were watched and controlled by the military discipline to which they were subjected, by the constant dependence of all their actions on the immediate orders of the emperor, and the various departments of which he was the head.

The expenses of the proconsular administration were paid by the provinces; and it was chiefly by abuses augmenting their amount, that the proconsuls were enabled to accumulate enormous fortunes during their short tenure of government. The burden was so heavily felt by Macedonia and Achaëa, even as early as the reign of Tiberius, that the complaints of these two provinces induced that emperor to obtain their union with the imperial province of Mœsia.\* Thrace, when it was reduced to a Roman province by Vespasian, was also added to the imperial list. As the power of the emperors rose into absolute authority over the Roman world, and the pageant of the republic faded away, all distinction between the different classes of provinces disappeared. They were distributed according to the wish of the reigning emperor, and their administration arbitrarily transferred to officers of whatever rank he thought fit to select. The Romans, indeed, had never affected much system

\* TACITUS, *Ann.* i. 76.

in this, any more than in any other branch of their government. Pontius Pilate, when he condemned our Saviour, governed Judæa with the rank of procurator of Cæsar; he was vested with the whole administrative, judicial, fiscal, and military authority, as completely as it could have been exercised by a proconsul or prætor, yet his title was only that of a finance officer, charged with the administration of those revenues which belonged to the imperial treasury.

The provincial governors usually named three or four deputies to carry on the business of the districts into which the province was divided, and each of these deputies was controlled and assisted by a local council. It may be remarked, that the condition of the inhabitants of the western portion of the Roman empire was different from that of the eastern; the people were generally treated as little better than serfs; they were not considered the absolute proprietors of the lands they cultivated. Adrian first gave them a full right of property in their lands, and secured to them a regular system of law by the publication of his perpetual edict. In Greece, the provincial administration was necessarily modified by the circumstance of the conquered being much farther advanced in social civilization than their conquerors.\* To facilitate the task of governing and taxing the Greeks, the Romans found them-

\* The high state of social civilization among the Greeks is proved by the existence of societies formed for the purpose of mutual assistance. PLINI, *Epist.* x. 93, 94. These friendly societies held property; and an inscription in the collection of the author, published in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature*, vol. iii. pt. 2, may relate to such an *Eranos*.

selves compelled to retain much of the civil government, and many of the financial arrangements, which they found existing; and hence arose the marked difference which is observed in the administration of the eastern and western portions of the empire. The existence of the free cities, of the local tribunals and provincial assemblies, and the respect paid to the laws, gave the Greek language an official character, and enabled the Greeks to acquire so great an influence in the administration of their country, as either to limit the extent of the despotic power of their Roman masters, or, when that proved impossible, to share its profits. But though the arbitrary decisions of the proconsuls received some check from the existence of fixed rules and permanent usages, still these barriers were insufficient to prevent the abuse of irresponsible authority. Those laws and customs which a proconsul dared not openly violate, he could generally nullify by some concealed measure of oppression. The fact, that throughout the Grecian provinces, as well as in the rest of the empire, the governors superintended the financial administration, and exercised the judicial power, is sufficient to explain the ruin and poverty which the Roman government produced. Before the wealth of the people had been utterly consumed, an equitable proconsul had it in his power to confer happiness on his provinces, and Cicero draws a very favourable picture of his own administration in Cilicia;\* but a few governors like

\* *Multæ civitates omni sære alieno liberatæ, multæ valde levatæ sunt. Omnes suis legibus, et judiciis usæ, aîρερωμίας adeptæ, revixerunt.*—*Ep. ad Att. vi. 2.*

Verres soon reduced a province to a state of poverty from which, it would have acquired ages of good government to enable it to recover.

#### SECTION VI.—FISCAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE ROMANS.

THE legal amount of the taxes, direct and indirect, levied by the Romans on the Greeks, was probably not greater than the sum paid to their national governments in the days of their independence. But a small amount of taxation arbitrarily imposed, unjustly collected, and injudiciously spent, weighs more heavily on the resources of the people, than immense burdens properly distributed and wisely employed. The wealth and resources of Greece had been greatest at the time when each city formed a separate state, and the inhabitants of each valley possessed the power of employing the taxes, which they paid, for objects which ameliorated their own condition. The moment the centralization of political power enabled one city to appropriate the revenues of another to its wants, or for its embellishment, the decline of the country commenced: but all the evil effects of centralization were not felt until the taxes were paid to foreigners. When the tributes were remitted to Rome, it was difficult to persuade absent administrators of the necessity of expending money on a road, a port, or an aqueduct, which had no direct connection with Roman interests. Had the Roman government acted according to the strictest principles of justice, Greece must have suffered from its dominion; but its avarice and

corruption, after the commencement of the civil wars, knew no bounds. The extraordinary payments levied on the provinces soon equalled, and sometimes exceeded, the regular and legal taxes. Cicero supplies ample proof of the extortions committed by the proconsuls, and no arrangements were adopted to restrain their avarice until the time of Augustus. It is, therefore only under the empire that any accurate picture of the fiscal administration of the Romans in Greece can be attempted.

Until the time of Augustus, the Romans had maintained their armies, by seizing and squandering the accumulated capital, hoarded by all the nations of the world. When that source of riches was exhausted, Augustus found himself compelled to seek for regular funds for maintaining the army: "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed."\* A regular survey of the whole empire was made, and the land-tax was assessed according to a valuation taken of the annual income of every species of property. A capitation-tax was also imposed on all the provincials whom the land-tax did not affect.†

The ordinary provincial taxes in the East were this land-tax, which generally amounted to a tenth of the produce, though, in some cases, it constituted a fifth, and in others, fell to a twentieth. It was, however, valued for a term of years, and paid

\* *St Luke*, ii. 1.

† SAVIGNY *ueber die Roemische Steuerverfassung unter den Kaisern*. Abhand. Acad. v. Berlin, 1822. *Economie Politique des Romains*, par DUREAU DE LA MALLE, who has most ably explained a remarkable passage of HYGINUS. Vol. i. 177; ii. 418, 434.



annually in money. This may be received as the general rule, though it was liable to exceptions.\* The subjects of the empire paid also a tax on cattle, and a variety of duties on importation and exportation, which were levied even on the conveyance of goods from one province to another. In Greece, the free cities also retained the right of levying local duties on their citizens. Contributions of provisions and manufactures were likewise exacted, for feeding and clothing the troops stationed in the provinces. Even under Augustus, who devoted his personal attention to reforming the financial administration of the empire, the proconsuls and provincial governors ventured to avail themselves of their position, as a means of gratifying their avarice. Licinius accumulated immense riches in Gaul. Tiberius perceived that the weight of the Roman fiscal system was pressing too severely on the provinces, and he rebuked the prefect of Egypt, for remitting too large a sum to Rome, as the amount proved he had overtaxed his province. The mere fact of a prefect's possessing the power of increasing or diminishing the amount of his remittances to the treasury, is enough to condemn the arbitrary nature of the Roman fiscal administration. The prefect was told by the emperor that a good shepherd should shear, not flay, his sheep. But no rulers ever estimated correctly the amount of taxes that their subjects could advantageously pay; and Tiberius received a lesson on the financial system of his empire from Battas, King of Dalmatia, who, on being asked the

\* SAVIGNY fixes the general adoption of a money payment for the land-tax in the time of Marcus Aurelius.

cause of a rebellion, replied, that it arose from the emperor's sending wolves to guard his flocks instead of shepherds.\*

The Roman government systematically attempted to transfer the whole of the ready money of its subjects into the coffers of the state. The city of Rome formed a drain for the wealth of all the provinces, and the whole empire was impoverished for its support. When Caligula expressed the wish that the Roman people had only one neck, in order that he might destroy them all at a single blow, he knew that the idea found a responsive echo in many a breast. There was a wise moral in the sentiment uttered in his frenzy; and many felt that the dispersion of those of the population of Rome who were nourished in idleness by the public revenues, would have been a great benefit to the rest of the empire.† The desire of seizing wealth wherever it could be found, was the dominant feeling in the personal policy of the emperors, as well as the proconsuls. The provincial governors enriched themselves by plundering their subjects, and the emperors filled their treasuries, by accusing the senators of those crimes which entailed confiscation of their fortunes. When Alexander the Great conquered Asia, the treasures which he dispersed increased the commerce of the world, created new cities, and augmented the general wealth of mankind. The Romans collected far greater riches from their con-

\* SUTONIUS, *Tiber.* 32.

† SUT. *Calig.* 30. Caligula was evidently thinking of the sums which would remain for his own extravagance, if he could have eluded furnishing the grain for the public distributions, and the money for maintaining a fixed price in the markets.

quests than Alexander had done, as they pushed their exactions much farther; but the rude state of society, in which they lived at the time of their first great successes, prevented their perceiving, that by carrying off or destroying all the moveable capital in their conquests, they must ultimately diminish the amount of their own revenues. The wealth brought away from the countries inhabited by the Greeks was incredible; for the Romans pillaged the conquered, as the Spaniards plundered Mexico and Peru, and treated them as the Turks subsequently governed Greece. The riches which centuries of industry had accumulated in Syracuse, Tarentum, Etolia, Macedonia, and Corinth, and the immense sums seized in the treasuries of the kings of Cyprus, Pergamus, Syria, and Egypt, were removed to Rome, and consumed in a way which virtually converted them into premiums for neglecting agriculture. They were dispersed in paying an immense army, in feeding an idle populace, which was thus withdrawn from all productive occupations, and in maintaining the household of the emperor, the senators, and the imperial freedmen. The consequence of the arrangements adopted for provisioning Rome was felt over the whole empire, and seriously affected the prosperity of the most distant provinces. It is necessary to notice them, in order to understand perfectly the financial system of the empire.

The citizens of Rome were fed by the republic, if it could not furnish them with profitable employment. An immense quantity of grain was distributed in this way, which was received as tribute from the provinces. Cæsar found three hundred and twenty

thousand persons receiving this gratuity. It is true he reduced the number to one half. The greater part of this grain was drawn from Sicily, Africa, and Egypt. This distribution enabled the poor to live in idleness, and was of itself extremely injurious to industry; but another arrangement was adopted by the Roman government, which rendered the cultivation of land around Rome unprofitable to its proprietors. A large sum was annually employed by the state in purchasing grain in the provinces, where it was cheapest, and in transporting this supply to Rome, where it was sold to the bakers at a fixed price. An allowance was also made to the private importers of grain, in order to ensure an abundant supply. In this manner, a very large sum was expended to keep bread cheap in a city, where a variety of circumstances tended to make it dear. This singular system of annihilating capital, and ruining agriculture and industry, was so deeply rooted in the Roman administration, that similar gratuitous distributions of grain were established at Antioch and Alexandria, and introduced into Constantinople, when that city became the capital of the empire.\*

It is not surprising that Greece suffered severely under a government, equally tyrannical in its conduct, and unjust in its legislation. In almost every department of public business the interests of the state were placed in opposition to those of the

\* It is curious to find Tacitus praising the establishment of bounties on the importation of foreign grain by Tiberius, without a single word on the evil effects of the system.—*Hist.* iv. 40. He must have traced their consequences, —*Ann.* vi. 13.

people; even when the letter of the law was mild, its administration was burdensome. The customs of Rome were moderate, and consisted of a duty of five per cent on exports and imports. Where the customs were so reasonable, commerce ought to have flourished; but the real amount levied under an unjust government bears no relation to the nominal payment. The government of Turkey has ruined the commerce of its subjects, with duties equally moderate. The Romans despised commerce; they considered merchants as little better than cheats, and concluded that they were always in the wrong, when they sought to avoid making any payment to government. The provinces in the eastern part of the Mediterranean are inhabited by a mercantile population. The wants of many parts can only be supplied by sea; and as the various provinces and small independent states were often separated by double lines of custom-houses, the subsistence of the population often depended on the revenue officers.\* The customs payable to Rome were let to farmers, who possessed extensive powers for their collection, and a special tribunal for the enforcement of their claims; they were consequently powerful tyrants in all the countries round the Egean Sea.

The ordinary duty on the transport of goods, from one province to another, amounted to two and a half per cent; but some kinds of merchandise were subjected to a tax of an eighth, which appears to have

\* *Cic. ad Att. ii. 16.*

been levied when the article first entered the Roman empire.\*

The provincial contributions pressed as heavily on the Greeks as the general taxes. The expense of the household of the proconsuls was very great; they had also the right of placing the troops in winter quarters, in whatever towns they thought fit. This power was rendered a profitable means of extorting money from the wealthy districts. Cicero mentions, that the island of Cyprus paid two hundred talents,—about forty-five thousand pounds annually,—in order to purchase exemption from this burden.† The power of the fiscal agents, charged to collect the extraordinary contributions in the provinces, was unlimited. One of the ordinary punishments for infringing the revenue laws, was confiscation,—a punishment which was converted by the collectors of the revenue into a systematic means of extortion. A regular trade in usury was established, in order to force proprietors to sell their property; and accusations were brought forward in the fiscal courts, merely to levy fines, or compel the accused to incur debts. The establishment of posts, which Augustus instituted for the transmission of military orders, was soon converted into a burden to the provinces, instead of being gradually rendered a public benefit, by allowing private individuals to make use of its services. The enlisting of recruits was another source of abuse.‡ Privileges and monopolies were granted to merchants

\* NAUDET, *Des changemens opérés dans toutes les parties de l'administration de l'empire Romain sous les règnes de Dioclétien, de Constantin, et de leurs successeurs, jusqu'à Julien.* 2 vols.

† *Ep. ad Attic.* v. 21.

‡ *Tac. Ann.* xiv. 18.

and manufacturers; the industry of a province was ruined, to raise a sum of money for an emperor or a favourite,\* and we find Trajan himself encouraging fraud by a monopoly.†

The free cities, and allied states, were treated with as much injustice as the provinces, though their position enabled them to escape many of the public burdens.‡ The crowns of gold, which had once been given by cities and provinces as a testimony of gratitude, were converted into a forced gift, and at last extorted as a tax of a fixed amount.§

In addition to the direct weight of all the public burdens, the severity was increased by the exemption which the Roman citizens enjoyed from the land-tax, the customs, the municipal burdens in the provinces, the free cities, and the allied states. This exemption filled Greece with traders and usurers, who obtained the right of citizenship as a speculation, merely to evade the payment of the local taxes. The Roman magistrates had the power of granting this immunity; and as they were in the habit of participating in the profits even of their enfranchised slaves, there can be no doubt that a regular traffic in citizenship was established, and this cause exercised considerable influence, in accelerating the ruin of the allied states and free cities, by defrauding them of their local privileges and revenues. When Nero wished to render himself popular in Greece, he extended the immunity from the general taxes

\* LAMPRIDIUS, in *Alex.* p. 122. † PHILOSTRATUS, *Vit. Soph.* l. xxv. 3.

‡ DIODORUS, xxxvi. 1. JUVENAL, viii. 107. TAC. *Ann.* xv. 45.

§ CIC. in *Pis.* 37. *Monum. Ancy.* where the *aureum coronarium* is indicated as a tax.

to all the Greeks ; but Vespasian found the financial affairs of the empire in such disorder, that he was compelled to revoke all grants of exemption to the provinces. Virtue, in the old times of Rome, meant valour; liberty, in the time of Nero, signified freedom from taxation. Of this liberty, Vespasian deprived Greece, Byzantium, Samos, Rhodes, and Lycia.\*

The financial administration of the Romans, inflicted a severer blow on the moral constitution of society, than it did on the material prosperity of the country. It divided the population of Greece into two classes, one possessing the title of Roman citizens,—a title often purchased by their wealth, and which implied freedom from taxation;—the other consisting of the Greeks, who, from poverty, were unable to purchase the envied privilege; and thus, by their very poverty, were compelled to bear the whole weight of the public burdens laid on the province. The rich and poor were thus ranged in two separate castes of society.

By the Roman constitution, the knights were intrusted with the management of the finances of the state. They were a body, in whose eyes wealth, on which their rank substantially depended, possessed an undue value. The prominent feature of their character was avarice, notwithstanding the praises of their justice which Cicero has left us. The knights not only acted as collectors of the revenues, but they also frequently farmed the taxes of a province for a term of years, sub-letting portions. They formed companies for farming the customs, and for

\* PAUSANIAS, *Archæica*, xvii. 2. SUTONIUS, *Vesp.* 8. PHILOSTRATUS, *Apoll. Tyan.* v. 14.



employing capital in public or private loans. They were favoured by the policy of Rome; while their own riches, and their secondary position in political affairs, served to screen them from attacks in the forum. For a long period, too, their body possessed the judicial power in the state, and consequently, the knights were judges in their own commercial cases, even if they could not decide on their individual gains.

The heads of the financial administration in Greece were thus placed in a moral position unfavourable to an equitable collection of the revenues. The case of Brutus, who attempted to oblige the Salaminians of Cyprus to pay him compound interest, at the rate of four per cent a month, shews that avarice and extortion were not dishonourable in the eyes of the Roman aristocracy.\* The history of selling the right of citizenship, of raising unjust fiscal prosecutions to extort fines, and enforce confiscation to increase landed estates, has only been preserved in its fruits. The existence of all these crimes is well known; their effects may be observed in the fact, that a single citizen, in the time of Augustus, had already rendered himself proprietor of the whole island of Cythera, and was able to raise a rebellion in Laconia by the severity of his extortions. His name was Julius Eurycles, and the circumstances are mentioned by Strabo.

The Roman citizens in Greece escaped the oppressive powers of the fiscal agents, not only in those cases wherein they were by law exempt from

\* *Cic. ad Att. v. 22; vi. 1.*

the payment of the provincial taxes, but also because they possessed the means of defending themselves against injustice, by the right of carrying their causes to Rome for judgment by appeal. These privileges soon rendered the number of Roman citizens, engaged in mercantile speculation and trade, very great in Greece. A considerable multitude of the inhabitants of Rome had, from the earliest times, been employed in trade and commerce, but this class never obtained the right of citizenship at home. They did not fail to settle in numbers in all the Roman conquests; and, in the provinces, they were correctly called Romans, and enjoyed from the republic the fullest protection. Even the Roman citizens were so many at a later period, that they could furnish not a few recruits to the legions.\* So numerous were they in Asia Minor, that Mithridates put to death eighty thousand when he commenced his war with the Romans, and the greater part was undoubtedly composed of merchants, traders, and money dealers. The Greeks at last obtained the right of Roman citizenship in such multitudes, that Nero may have made no very enormous sacrifice of public revenue when he conferred liberty, or freedom from tribute, on all the Greeks.

It is unnecessary to dwell, at any length, on the effects of the extensive system of general oppression, and partial privileges, which has been described. Honest industry was useless in trade, and political intrigue was the easiest mode of making a large

\* CICEERO, *ad Att.* v. 18. *Fam.* xv. 1.

fortune, even in commerce. A rapid decline in the wealth of Greece, and a great diminution in the numbers of the population, took place. So early as the time of Augustus, many of the richest cities of Greece were in a ruinous condition, some of the most fertile regions depopulated, and the inexhaustible supply of wealth, which the Romans supposed they would find in the provinces, began to fail.\*

SECTION VII.—DEPOPULATION OF GREECE CAUSED BY  
THE ROMAN GOVERNMENT.

EXPERIENCE proves, that the same law of the progress of society, which gives to an increasing population a tendency to outgrow the means of subsistence, gives also, to a declining one, a power of pressing on the limits of taxation. A government may push taxation up to that point, when it commences to arrest all increase in the means of subsistence; but the moment this stationary condition of society is produced, the people will begin to consume a portion of the wealth previously absorbed by the public taxes, and the revenues of the country will have a tendency to decrease; or, what is the same thing, in so far as the political law is concerned, the government will find greater difficulty in collecting the same amount of revenue.

The depopulation of the Roman provinces was, however, not caused entirely by the financial

\* SALLUST says, *Omnibus modis pecuniam trahunt, vexant ; tamen summa libidine divitias suas vincere nequeunt.*

oppression of the government. In order to secure a new conquest against rebellion, the armed population was generally exterminated, or reduced to slavery. If the people displayed a spirit of independence, they were regarded as robbers, and destroyed without mercy; and this cruelty was so engrafted into the system of the Roman administration, that Augustus treated the Salassi in this manner, when their disorders could easily have been effectually prevented by milder measures.\* At the time the Romans first engaged in war with the Macedonians and Greeks, the contest was of that doubtful nature, that the Romans were not likely to relax the usual policy which they adopted for weakening their foes. Macedonia, Epirus, Etolia, and Achæa, were, therefore, treated with the greatest severity at the time of their conquest. Æmilius Paulus, in order to secure the submission of Epirus, destroyed seventy cities, and sold one hundred and fifty thousand of the inhabitants as slaves. The policy which considered a reduction of the population necessary for securing obedience, would not fail to adopt efficient measures to prevent its again becoming either numerous or wealthy. The utter destruction of Carthage is a fact which has no parallel in history. Mummius razed Corinth to the ground, and sold its whole population as slaves. Delos was the great emporium of the trade of the East about the time of the conquest of Greece; it was plundered by the troops of

\* STRABO, iv. SUTONIUS, *Aug.* 21. The inhabitants of the valley of Aoste, of whom 36,000 were sold as slaves.

† LIVY, xlv. 34. DIODORUS, xxxi. PLUTARCH, *Æmilius Paulus*.

Mithridates, and never recovered its former state of prosperity under the Romans. Sylla utterly destroyed several cities of Bœotia, and depopulated Athens, the Piræus, and Thebes.\* The inhabitants of Megara were nearly exterminated by Julius Cæsar, and a considerable number of the cities of Achæa, Etolia, and Acarnania, were laid waste by order of Augustus, that their inhabitants might be compelled to dwell in the newly established Roman colonies of Nicopolis and Patras.† The celebrated letter of Sulpicius to Cicero, so familiar to the lovers of poetry from the paraphrase of Lord Byron, affords irrefragable testimony to the rapid decline of Greece under the Roman government.‡

Greece suffered very severely during the civil wars. The troops which she still possessed were compelled to range themselves on one side or the other. The Etolians and Acarnanians joined Cæsar, the Athenians, Lacedæmonians, and Bœotians, ranged themselves as partizans of Pompey. The Athenians, and most of the other Greeks, afterwards espoused the cause of Brutus and Cassius; but the Lacedæmonians sent a body of two thousand men to serve as auxiliaries to Octavius. The destruction of property caused by the progress through Greece of

\* Pages 34, 35.

† Though we have no picture, by a contemporary, of the misery which Augustus caused in Greece, still we can imagine it to have been severe from the manner in which he treated Italy. He seized the property of the inhabitants of eighteen of the richest cities, and divided the lands amongst his soldiers. The soldiers extended their invasions to the possessions of other cities; and Virgil has immortalized their encroachments and robberies. Augustus must have settled nearly 160,000 men in the various military colonies which he formed, by confiscating the lands of the lawful proprietors.

—APPIAN, *Bell. Civ.* v. 5. 13. 22.

‡ *Childe Harold*, canto iv.

the various bodies of troops, whose passions were inflamed by the disorders of the civil war, was not compensated by the favours conferred on a few cities by Cæsar, Antony, and Augustus. The remission of a few taxes, or the present of additional revenues to an oligarchical magistracy, could exercise no influence on the general prosperity of the country.

The depopulation, however, caused by war alone, would have been very soon repaired, had the government of Greece been equitably conducted. It is impossible to point out, in precise detail, all the various measures by which the Roman administration undermined the physical and moral strength of the Greek nation; it is sufficient to establish the fact, that too much was exacted from the body of the people in the shape of public burdens, and that the neglect of all its duties on the part of the government, gradually diminished the productive resources of the country. While no useful public works were repaired, bands of robbers were allowed to infest the provinces for long periods without molestation. The extortions of the Roman magistrates, however, were more injurious, and rendered property more insecure, than the violence of the banditti. The public acts of robbery are those only which have been preserved by history; but for each open attack on public property, hundreds of private families were reduced to poverty. Fulvius despoiled the temples of Ambracia of their most valuable ornaments, and even carried away the statues of the gods.\* Verres,

\* B. C. 189. LIVY, xxxviii. 43.

on his passage through Greece to his post in Cilicia, carried off a quantity of gold from the temple of Minerva at Athens.\* Piso, while proconsul of Macedonia, plundered both it and Greece, and left both to be ravaged by Thracian banditti.† Even under the cautious and conciliatory administration of Augustus, the oppressive conduct of the Romans caused seditions, both in Laconia — which was a favoured district, from its having taken part with the emperor against Antony — and in Attica, where the weakness, to which the city was reduced, seemed to render any expression of discontent impossible.‡ The Greeks had not, in the time of Augustus, entirely lost their ancient spirit and valour, and though comparatively feeble, their conduct was an object of some solicitude to the Roman government.

It is necessary to indicate a cause of depopulation, which had begun to exercise some influence in Greece long before the Roman conquest. The desire of the population to occupy larger properties than their ancestors had cultivated, has already been noticed as an effect of the riches obtained by the Macedonian conquests; and its influence as a moral check on the amount of the population of Greece has been adverted to.§ This powerful cause of depopulation was strengthened under the Roman government. The love of immense parks, splendid villas, and luxurious living, introduced vice and

\* Verres compelled a single city in Sicily to pay 34,000 medimni of wheat to one of his favourites. Ctc. in *Ver.* ii. 1. 17. 44.

† Ctc. in *Pisonem.* 17. 34. 40. *pro Font.* 16.

‡ STRABO, *Laconia*, vol. ii. p. 186, 190. ed. Tauch. AHRENS, *de Athenarum statu politico*, etc. 12, and his authorities.

§ P. 20.

celibacy to such an extent in the higher ranks, that the wealthy families of the empire became gradually extinct. A strong line of distinction was likewise drawn between the rich and the poor. The rich formed an aristocratic class, the poor were sinking towards a dependent grade in society; they were fast approaching the state of coloni or serfs. In this state of society, neither class shews a tendency to increase. It appears indeed to be a law of human society, that all classes of mankind which are separated, by superior wealth and privileges, from the body of the people, are, by their oligarchical constitution, liable to a rapid decline. As the privileges which they enjoy have created an unnatural position in life, vice is increased beyond that limit which is consistent with the duration of society. The fact has been long observed with regard to the oligarchies of Sparta and Rome. It had its effect even on the more extended citizenship of Athens, and it even affects, in our times, the two hundred thousand electors who form the oligarchy of France.\*

\* ARIST. *de Rep.* ii. 9. PLUTARCH, *Lycourgus*, 8. The numerous admissions of new citizens at Athens, are mentioned by DUREAU DE LA MALLE, (*Economie Politique des Romains*, i. 419,) who has the following passage concerning the electors in France, i. 417:—Ainsi, à Paris, où il règne plus d'aisance que dans le reste du royaume, la moyenne des enfants par ménage n'est que de 3½, nombre insuffisant pour maintenir la population au même niveau, puisque à vingt ans la moitié des enfants a péri avant de se marier. Si l'on prend la même moyenne sur les 200,000 électeurs, elle se trouve encore plus faible; cependant la population totale augmente par an de 1½.



## SECTION VIII. — ROMAN COLONIES ESTABLISHED IN GREECE.

THE real importance of the Greek people in the opinion of the Romans, and the necessity of commanding the country by some important positions, are displayed in the policy which dictated the establishment of colonies, in some of the strongest posts. The Roman government had neither the general views of the ancient Greeks, nor of modern European nations, in the formation of colonies. In the early part of their history, the object was principally to remove a portion of the turbulent plebeian population; at a later period, the design was to settle the numerous bands of veterans, which peace compelled the government to disband, in a manner that would render them useful, instead of dangerous to the state. The improvement of the people, the increase of the Roman population, and the spread of Roman civilization, were never considered of much consequence, and the condition of the expatriated colonists was little regarded. The first foreign colony was settled at Carthage; upwards of fifty had been previously established in Italy. After the commencement of the civil wars of Marius and Sylla, colonization was confined to the military; though Julius Cæsar, while he was moulding the republic into an empire, sent out about eighty thousand colonists of a mixed nature. In order to secure the permanent tranquillity of Greece, he determined to rebuild Corinth, which had remained in ruins from the time of its destruction by Mum-

nius. The position of Corinth was admirably suited for placing a military force to overlook the proceedings of the Greeks who were opposed to Cæsar's government. The measure was evidently one of precaution, and very little was done to give it the show of having originated in a wish to revive the prosperity of Greece. The population of the new Corinth consisted of Romans, or the descendants of Roman freedmen. These were either furnished with very scanty means for reconstructing the city, or they were allowed to collect building materials, and search for wealth, in any way, how offensive soever it might be to the feelings of the Greeks. The tombs, which had alone escaped the fury of Mummius, were destroyed to construct the new buildings, and excavated for the rich ornaments and valuable sepulchral vases which they often contained. So systematically did the Romans pursue this profession of violating the tombs, that it became a source of very considerable wealth to the colony, and Rome was filled with works of archaic art.\*

The policy of Augustus towards Greece was openly one of precaution. The Greeks still continued to occupy the attention of the ruling class at Rome, more perhaps than their declining power warranted; they had not yet sunk into the political insignificance which they were destined to reach in the days of Juvenal and Tacitus. Augustus reduced the power of all those Greek states that retained any influence, whether they had joined his own party, or favoured Antony. Athens was deprived

\* STRABO, viii. 6.

of its authority over Eretria and Egina, and no longer permitted to increase its local revenues, by selling the right of citizenship. Lacedæmon was also weakened by the establishment of the independent community of the free Laconians, a confederation of twenty-four maritime cities, whose population, consisting chiefly of *perioikoi*, had hitherto been subject to Sparta. Augustus, it is true, assigned the Island of Cythera, and a few places on the Messenian frontier, to the Lacedæmonian state; but the gift was a very slight compensation for the loss sustained in a political point of view, whatever it might have been in a financial.

But the most remarkable act of the administration of Augustus, was the creation of two new states, Patras and Nicopolis, expressly founded to supplant the influence of Achæa and Etolia. These two cities were made Roman colonies. In order to repopulate Patras, a number of soldiers were established as citizens of the new colony, and the municipality was endowed with the revenues of several of the Achæan and Locrian towns, which were deprived of their civic existence. To complete the required numbers of the middling and lower orders of the population, the inhabitants of the districts which surrounded Patras, were forced to abandon their dwellings; and the descendants of the Cilician pirates, established by Pompey at Dyme, were compelled to become citizens of Patras. Nicopolis was founded in order to afford a secure station for the Roman garrison, placed to overawe Etolia and Epirus; the name was conferred in order to celebrate the victory of Actium. The circumstances of its foundation

contribute to the many existing proofs, that humanity and benevolence were feelings utterly unknown to the policy of Augustus, and that the principles of his administration contributed more directly to the decline and depopulation of Italy and Greece, than the accidental tyranny or folly of any of his successors. The inhabitants of a great part of Etolia were torn from their abodes, where they were residing on their own property, surrounded by their cattle, their olive-trees, and vineyards, and compelled to construct such dwellings as they were able, and find such means of livelihood as presented themselves, at Nicopolis. The destruction of an immense amount of vested capital in provincial buildings was the consequence; the agriculture of a whole province was ruined, and the population must have soon died away, in the poverty which they would experience under the change of a city life. The municipal government of Nicopolis was intrusted to a colony of Romans, who directed the local administration, and kept the Greeks in subjection. To secure the influence of this Roman colony in Greece, the new state was admitted into the Amphictyonic council, with a double vote.\* The peculiar privileges conferred on the three Roman colonies of Corinth, Patras, and Nicopolis, and the close connection in which they were placed with the imperial government, enabled them to flourish for centuries amidst the general poverty which the despotic system of the Roman provincial administration spread over the rest of Greece. In a few generations they became Greek cities.

\* PAUSANIAS, *Elia*. Pr. xxiii. 2. *Phoc.* xxxviii. 2. *Achaica*, xviii. 6.

SECTION IX.—POLITICAL CONDITION OF GREECE FROM  
THE TIME OF AUGUSTUS TO THAT OF CARACALLA.

Two descriptions of Greece have been preserved, which afford vivid pictures of the impoverished condition of the country, during two centuries of the Roman government. Strabo has left us an account of the depopulated aspect of Greece, shortly after the foundation of the Roman colonies of Patras and Nicopolis. Pausanias has described, with melancholy exactness, the desolate appearance of many celebrated cities, during the time of the Antonines.\* The taxes imposed on the country, and the burden of the provincial administration, drained off all the wealth of the people; and those necessary public works, which required a large expenditure for their maintenance and preservation, were allowed to deteriorate and fall gradually into ruin. The emperors, at times, indeed, attempted, by a few isolated acts of mercy, to alleviate the sufferings of the Greeks. Tiberius united the provinces of Achæa and Macedonia to the imperial government of Mœsia, in order to deliver them from the weight of the proconsular administration.† When Nero visited Greece to receive a musical crown at the Olympic games, he recompensed the Greeks, for their flattery of his music, by declaring them free from tribute. The immunities which he conferred, produced some serious disputes between the various

\* The *Eliacs* of Pausanias were written A. D. 173. LEAKE'S *Topography of Athens and Attica*. Introduction.

† TACITUS, *Ann.* i. 76. 80.

states, concerning the collection of their municipal taxes; and Vespasian rendered these disputes a pretext for annulling the freedom conferred by Nero.\* The free cities of Greece still possessed not only the administration of considerable revenues, but also the power of raising money, by local taxes, for the maintenance of their temples, schools, universities, aqueducts, roads, ports, and public buildings. Trajan carefully avoided destroying any of the municipal privileges of the Greeks, and he endeavoured to improve their condition by his just and equitable administration; yet his policy was averse from the increasing of local institutions.†

Hadrian treated Greece with peculiar favour. He opened a new line of policy to the sovereigns of Rome, and avowed the determination of reforming the institutions of the Romans, and adapting his government to the altered state of society in the empire. He perceived, that the central government was weakening its power, and diminishing its resources, by acts of injustice, which rendered property every where insecure. To remedy the evils in the dispensation of the laws, he published his perpetual edict, which certainly exercised a favourable influence on the condition of the inhabitants of the provinces. It laid the foundation of that regular and systematic administration of justice in the Roman empire, which gradually absorbed all the local judicatures of the Greeks, and, by forming a numerous and well educated society of lawyers, guided by uniform rules, raised up a partial barrier against arbitrary power.

\* PAUSANIAS, *Ach.* xvii. 2. PHILOSTRATUS, *Apoll. Tyan.* v. 14.

† PLINY, *Epist.* x. 97.

In order to lighten the weight of taxation, Hadrian abandoned all the arrears of taxes accumulated in preceding years.\* His general system of administrative reforms was pursued by the Antonines, and perfected by the edict of Caracalla, which conferred the rank of Roman citizens on all the free inhabitants of the empire. Hadrian certainly deserves the merit, of having first seen the necessity of securing the imperial government, by effacing the badges of servitude from the provincials, and connecting the interests of the majority of the landed proprietors, throughout the Roman empire, with the existence of the imperial administration. He was the first who laid aside the prejudices of a Roman, and secured to the provincials that legal rank in the constitution of the empire, which placed their rights on a level with those of Roman citizens.

Hadrian, from personal taste, cultivated Greek literature, and admired Grecian art. He left traces of his love of improvement in every portion of the empire, through which he kept constantly travelling; but Greece, and especially Attica, received an extraordinary share of the imperial favour. It is difficult to estimate how far his conduct immediately affected the general well-being of the population, or to point out the precise manner of its operation on society; but it is evident, that the impulse given to improvement, by his example and his administration, produced a slight tendency to ameliorate the condition of the Greeks. Greece had sunk to its lowest state of poverty and depopulation under the financial

\* SPARTIANUS, in *Adriano*, p. 10.

oppression of the Flavian family, and it enjoyed the advantage of good government under Hadrian. The extraordinary improvements, which the Roman emperors might have effected in the empire, by a judicious employment of the public revenues, may be estimated from the immense public works executed by Hadrian. At Athens, he completed the temple of Jupiter Olympius, which had been commenced by Pisistratus, and of which sixteen columns still exist to astonish the spectator by their size and beauty. He built temples to Juno and to Jupiter Panhellenius, and ornamented the city by a magnificent pantheon, library, and gymnasium. He commenced an aqueduct to convey an abundant stream of water from Cephisia, which was completed by Antoninus. At Megara, he rebuilt the temple of Apollo. He constructed an aqueduct which conveyed the waters of the lake Stymphalus to Corinth, and he erected new baths in that city. But the surest proof that his improvements were directed by a judicious spirit, is to be found in his attention to the roads. Nothing could tend more to advance the prosperity of this mountainous country, than removing the difficulties of intercourse between its various provinces; for there is no spot where the expense of transport presents a greater barrier to trade. He rendered the road from Northern Greece to the Peloponnesus by the Scironian rocks, easy and commodious for wheeled carriages. Great, however, as these improvements were, he conferred one still greater on the Greeks, as a nation, by commencing the task of moulding their various local customs and laws into one



general system, founded on the basis of the Roman jurisprudence;\* and while ingrafting the law of the Romans on the stock of society in Greece, he did not seek to destroy the municipal institutions of the people. The policy of Hadrian, in raising the Greeks to an equality of civil rights with the Romans, gave an administrative sanction to whatever remained of the Macedonian institutions throughout the East; and as soon as the edict of Caracalla had conferred on all the subjects of the empire the rights of Roman citizenship, the Greeks became, in reality, the dominant people in the Eastern portion of the Roman empire, and Greek institutions ultimately obtained the supremacy.

It is curious, that Antoninus, who adopted all the views of Hadrian with regard to the annihilation of the exclusive supremacy of the Roman citizens, should have thought it worth his attention to point out the supposed ancient connection between Rome and Arcadia. He was the first Roman who commemorated the relationship between Greece and Rome, by any public act. He conferred on Palantium, the Arcadian city from which Evander was supposed to have led a Greek colony to the banks of the Tiber, all the privileges ever granted to the most favoured municipalities. The habits and character of Marcus Aurelius, led him to regard the Greeks with the greatest favour; and had his reign been more peaceful, and left his time more at his own disposal, Greece would unquestionably have profited by his leisure. He rebuilt the temple of

\* SPANHEIM, *Orbis Romanus*, 393.

Eleusis, which had been burnt to the ground; he improved the schools of Athens, and increased the salaries of the professors, who then rendered that city the most celebrated university in the civilized world. Herodes Atticus, whose splendid public edifices in Greece rivalled the works of Hadrian, was, from his eminence in literature and taste, treated with distinction by Marcus Aurelius, until the emperor felt it was a duty to punish his oppressive and tyrannical conduct to the Athenians. When found guilty, the friendship of the emperor could not save him from banishment.\*

Little can be collected concerning the condition of Greece under the successors of Marcus Aurelius. The Roman government was occupied with wars, which seldom directly affected the provinces occupied by the Greeks. Literature and science were neglected by the soldiers of fortune who mounted the imperial throne; and Greece, forgotten and neglected, appears to have enjoyed a degree of tranquillity and repose, which enabled her to profit by the improvements in the imperial government, which Hadrian had introduced, and the decree of Caracalla had ratified.†

The institutions of the Greeks, which were unconnected with the exercise of the supreme executive power in the country, were generally allowed to exist, even by the most jealous of the emperors. When these institutions disappeared, their destruction was effected by the progressive change, which time gradually introduced into Greek society, and

\* PHILOSTRATUS, *Vita Soph.* ii. 1. 4.

† A. D. 212—217.

not by any violence on the part of the Roman government. It is difficult, indeed, to trace the limits of the state and city administration in matters of taxation, or the exact extent of their control over their local funds. Some cities possessed independence, and others were free from tribute; and these privileges gave the Greek nation a political position in the empire, which prevented their being confounded with the other provincials in the East, until the reign of Justinian.\* As the Greek cities in Thrace, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, preserved these important privileges, it is not wonderful that, in Greece, the whole frame of the ancient social institutions was preserved.†

Pausanias found the Amphictyonic council still holding its meetings, three centuries after the Roman conquest.‡ The deputies of the Achæan, Bœotian, and Phocic commonwealths, continued to meet for the purpose of transacting the business of their confederacies.§ The Athenians were allowed to maintain an armed guard in the Island of Delos.|| The Olympic, Pythic, and Isthmian games, were regularly celebrated.¶ The Areopagus at Athens, and the Gerontia at Sparta, still exercised their functions.\*\* The different cities and provinces retained their peculiar dialects, and the inhabitants of

\* *Αὐτονομία* was the privilege of some cities, others were *ἀντιλαϊς πόλεις*.

† The assemblies of the people in the Greek cities were, however, regarded by the Romans with great jealousy: *Acts*, xix. 40, "For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse."

‡ *Phoc.* viii. 2. § *Achaica*, xvi. 7. *Bœot.* xxxiv. 1. *Phoc.* iv. 2.

|| *Arcad.* xxxiii. ¶ *Eliac. Pr.* vii. 4. *Phoc.* vii. 2. *Corinth.* ii. 2.

\*\* *Attica*, xxviii. 5. *Lacon.* xi. 2.

Sparta continued to affect the Laconism of antiquity in their public despatches.\* The mountaineers of Attica, in the time of Antoninus, spoke a purer language than the populace of the city of Athens, which still bore evidence of its heterogeneous origin after the massacre of Sylla.† Had the financial burdens of the Roman government not weighed too heavily on the population, the rivalry of the Greeks, directed entirely to local improvements, to philosophy, literature, and the arts, must have proved useful and honourable to their country. But the moral supports of the old frame-work of society were destroyed before the edict of Caracalla had emancipated Greece; and when tranquillity arrived, they were only capable of enjoying the felicity of having been forgotten by their tyrants.

SECTION X.—THE GREEKS AND ROMANS NEVER SHEWED  
ANY DISPOSITION TO UNITE AND FORM ONE PEOPLE.

THE habits and tastes of the Greeks and Romans were so different, that they produced a feeling of antipathy in the two nations. The Roman writers, from prejudice and jealousy, of which they were themselves, perhaps, unconscious, have transmitted to us a very incorrect picture of the state of the Greeks, during the first centuries of the empire. They did not observe, with attention, the marked distinction between the Asiatic and Alexandrine

\* STRABO, viii. 1. vol. 2. 138. ed. TAUCH. PAUS. *Messen.* xxvii. 5. PHILOSTRATUS, *Apoll. Tyan.* ii. 62.

† PHILOSTRATUS, v. *Soph. Herod. Att.* TACITUS.

Greeks, and the natives of Hellas. The European population, pursuing the quiet life of landed proprietors, or engaged in the pursuits of commerce and agriculture, was considered, by Roman prejudice, as unworthy of notice. Lucian, himself a Greek indeed, contrasts the tranquil and respectable manner of life at Athens, with the folly and luxury of Rome;\* but the Romans looked on provincials as little better than serfs, (*coloni*;) and merchants were, in their eyes, only tolerated cheats. The Greek character was estimated from the conduct of the adventurers, who thronged, from the wealthy and corrupted cities of the East, in order to seek their fortunes at Rome; and who, from motives of fashion and taste, were unduly favoured by the wealthy aristocracy.† The most distinguished of these Greeks were literary men, professors of philosophy, rhetoric, grammar, mathematics, and music. Great numbers were engaged as private teachers; and this class was regarded with some respect by the Roman nobility, from its intimate connection with their families. The great mass of the Greeks residing at Rome were, however, employed in connection with the public and private amusements of the capital, and were found engaged in every profession, from the directors of the theatres and opera-houses, down to the swindlers who frequented the haunts of vice. The testimony of the Latin authors may be received as sufficiently

\* NIGRINUS.

† Grammaticus, rhetor, geometres, pictor, aliptes, Augur, schoenobates, medicus, magus; omnia novit. Græculus esuriens, in cœlum jussus, ibit.

JUVENAL, *Sat.* iii. 76.

accurate, concerning the light in which the Greeks were regarded at Rome, and as a not incorrect portraiture of the Greek population of the capital.

The expressions of the Romans, when speaking of the Greeks, often display nothing more than the manner in which the proud aristocracy of the empire regarded all foreigners, those even whom they admitted to their personal intimacy. The Greeks were confounded with the great body of strangers from the Eastern nations, in one general sentence of condemnation; and not unnaturally, for the Greek language served as the ordinary means of communication with all foreigners from the East. The magicians, conjurers, and astrologers of Syria, Egypt, and Chaldæa, were naturally mixed up, both in society and public opinion, with the adventurers of Greece, and contributed to form the despicable type which was unjustly enough transferred from the fortune-hunters at Rome, to the whole Greek nation. It is hardly necessary to observe, that Greek literature, as cultivated at Rome during this period, had no connection with the national feelings of the Greek people. As far as the Greeks themselves were concerned, learning was an honourable and lucrative occupation to its successful professors; but, in the estimation of the higher classes at Rome, Greek literature was merely an ornamental exercise of the mind,—a fashion of the wealthy.\* This ignorance of Greece and the Greeks, induced Juvenal to draw his conclusive proof of the utter falsity of the Greek character, and of the fabulous nature of all

\* Claudius dismissed a Greek magistrate from his employment, because he was ignorant of Latin. Suetonius, *Claud.* 16.

Greek history, from his own doubts concerning a fact which is avouched by the testimony of Herodotus and Thucydides; but as a retort to the *Græcia mendax* of the Roman satirist, the apter observation of Lucian may be cited—that the Romans spoke truth only once in their lives, and that was when they made their wills. \*

The Romans were never very deeply imbued with a passionate admiration for Grecian art, and the painting and sculpture which they could procure as articles of commercial industry, was sufficient to gratify their taste. This was peculiarly fortunate for Greece, since there can be no doubt that the republic and the emperors would not have hesitated in regarding all the works of art, which were the public property of the Grecian states, as belonging to the Roman commonwealth by the right of conquest, if the avarice of the people would have received any gratification from the seizure.† The great dissimilarity of manners between the two nations, appears in the aversion, with which many distinguished senators viewed the introduction of the works of Grecian art, by Marcellus and Mummius, after the conquests of Syracuse and Corinth. This aversion unquestionably contributed much to save Greece from the general confiscation of her treasures of art, to which the people clung with the most passionate attachment. Cicero says, that no Greek city of Europe or Asia would consent to sell a painting, or

\* *Creditur olim*

*Velificatus Athos, et quicquid Græcia mendax*

*Audet in historia.*—*JUV. Sat. x. 173.*

HEROD. vii. 21. THUCYD. LEAKE'S *Travels in Northern Greece.*

† PAUSANIUS, *Arcad. xlv.*

a statue, or a work of art, but that, on the contrary, all were ready to become purchasers.\* The feeling of art, in the two people, is not inaptly illustrated, by comparing the conduct of the Rhodian republic with that of the Emperor Augustus. When the Rhodians were besieged by Demetrius Poliorcetes, they refused to destroy his statues, and those of his father, which had been erected in their agora. But when Augustus conquered Egypt, he ordered all the statues of Antony to be destroyed, and, with a meanness somewhat at variance with patrician dignity, he accepted a bribe of one thousand talents from the Alexandrines, to spare the statues of Cleopatra. The Greeks honoured art even more than the Romans loved vengeance. Works of art were, at times, carried away by those Roman governors who spared nothing they could pillage in their provinces; but these spoliations were always regarded in the light of direct robberies; and Fulvius Nobilior, Verres, and Piso, who had distinguished themselves in this species of violence, were considered as the most infamous of the Roman magistrates.

It is true, that Sylla carried off the ivory statue of Minerva from the temple of Alalcomenæ, and that Augustus removed that of the great temple of Tegea, as a punishment to that city for espousing the party of Antony.† But these very exceptions prove, how sparingly the Romans availed themselves of their rights of conquest; or history would have recorded the remarkable statues which they had allowed to remain in Greece, rather than signalized,

\* VERR. in sig. 59.

† PAUS. *Bœot.* xxxiii. 4. ARCAD. xlv. 1.



at times, the few which they transported to Rome. When Caligula and Nero were permitted to govern the world according to the impulses of insanity, they ordered many celebrated works of art to be conveyed to Rome—among these, the celebrated Cupid of Praxiteles was twice removed. It was restored to Thespiae by Claudius; but, on being again taken away by Nero, it perished in a conflagration.\* Very little is subsequently recorded concerning this species of plunder, which Hadrian and his two successors would hardly have permitted. From the great number of the most celebrated works of ancient art which Pausanias enumerates in his tour through Greece, it is evident, that no extensive injury had then occurred, even to the oldest buildings. After the reign of Commodus, the Roman emperors paid but little attention to art; and unless the value of the materials caused the destruction of ancient works, they were allowed to stand undisturbed until the buildings around them crumbled into dust. During the period of nearly a century, which elapsed from the time of Pausanias, until the first irruption of the Goths into Greece, it is certain, that the temples and public buildings of the inhabited cities were very little changed in their general aspect, from the appearance which they had presented, when the Roman legions first entered Hellas.

\* PAUS. *Bæot.* xxvii. 3.

## SECTION XI. — STATE OF SOCIETY AMONG THE GREEKS.

IN order to give a complete account of the state of society among the Greeks under the Roman empire, it would be necessary to enter into several dissertations connected with the political history of the Romans. To avoid so extensive a field, it will be necessary to give only a cursory sketch of those divisions of the Greek nation whose influence, though apparent in the annals of the Roman empire, did not permanently affect the progress of the national history. The state of civilization, the popular objects of pursuit, even the views of national advancement, continued, under the imperial government, to be very different, and often opposite, in the different divisions of the Greek nation.

The inhabitants of Hellas had sunk into a quiet and secluded population. The schools of Athens were still famous, and Greece was visited by numbers of fashionable and learned travellers from other countries, as Italy now is; but the citizens dwelt in their own little world, clinging to antiquated forms and usages, and to old superstitions,—holding little intercourse, and having little community of feeling, either with the rest of the empire, or with the other divisions of the Hellenic race.

The maritime cities of Europe, Asia Minor, and the Archipelago, embraced a considerable population, chiefly occupied in commerce and manufactures, and taking little interest in the politics of Rome, or in the literature of Greece. All commerce was

despised by the Romans; and though the Greeks had looked on trade with more favour, yet the influence of declining wealth, and of unjust laws, was rapidly tending to depreciate the mercantile character, to render the occupation less respectable, and ruinous to the commercial cities. It is not inappropriate to notice one instance of Roman commercial legislation. Julius Cæsar, among his projects of reform, thought fit to revive an old Roman law, which prohibited any citizen from having in his possession a larger sum than sixty thousand sesterces\* in the precious metals. This law was, of course, neglected; but under Tiberius, it was made a pretext by informers, to levy various fines and confiscations in Greece and Syria.† The commerce of this portion of the world, which had once consisted of commodities of general consumption, declined, under the fiscal avarice of the Romans, into an export trade, to the larger cities of the west of Europe, of a few articles of luxury. The wines of the Archipelago, the carpets of Pergamus, the cambric of Cos, and the dyed woollens of Laconia, are particularly mentioned.‡ The decline of trade is not to be overlooked amidst the ruin of the Roman empire; for wealth depended even more on commerce, in ancient times, than it does in modern, from the imperfect means of transport and banking which then existed.

The division of the Greek nation, which occupied the most important social position in the empire,

\* L.600.

† SUETONIUS, *in Tib.* 49.

‡ PLINY, *Hist. Nat.* xiv. viii. JUVENAL, *Sat.* viii. 101. HORACE, *Sat.* i. 2.

consisted of the remains of the Macedonian and Greek colonies in Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia. These countries were filled with Greeks; and the cities of Alexandria and Antioch, the second and third in the empire in size, population, and wealth, were chiefly peopled by Greeks. The influence of Alexandria alone on the Roman empire, and on European civilization, would require a long treatise, in order to do justice to the subject. Its schools of philosophy produced modifications of Christianity in the East. Those feuds between the Jews and Christians, which its municipal disputes first created, were, by its powerful influence, bequeathed to following centuries, so that, in Western Europe, we still debase Christianity by the admixture of those prejudices which had their rise in the amphitheatre of Alexandria. Its wealth and population excited the jealousy of Augustus, who deprived it of its municipal institutions, and rendered it a prey to the factions of the amphitheatre, the curse of Roman civic anarchy. The populace, unrestrained by any system of order, and without any social guidance, followed the dictates of their passions whenever they were crowded together. Hadrian was struck with the activity and industry of the Alexandrines; and though he does not appear to have admired their character, he saw that the increase of their privileges was the true way to lessen the influence of the mob.

Antioch, and the other Greek cities of the East, had preserved their municipal privileges; and the Greek population in Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia, remained every where completely separated from the

original inhabitants. Their corporate organization often afforded them an opportunity of interfering with the details of the public administration, and their bold and seditious spirit enabled them to defend their own rights and interests. When the free population of the provinces acquired the rights of Roman citizenship, the Greeks of these countries, who formed the majority of the privileged classes, and were already in possession of the principal share of the local administration, became soon possessed of the whole authority of the Roman government. They appeared as the real representatives of the state, placed the native population in the position of a party excluded from power, and consequently rendered it more dissatisfied than formerly. In the East, therefore, after the publication of Caracalla's edict, the Greeks immediately became again the dominant people in the East. In spite of the equality of all the provincials in the eye of the law, a violent opposition was created between the Greeks and the natives; and the Greeks, in a large portion of the eastern half of the empire, occupied a position exactly similar to that of the Romans in the western. The same causes produced similar effects in the East and the West; and from the period when the Greeks became a privileged and dominant class, administering the severe fiscal supremacy of the Roman government, instead of ruling with the equal justice of their Macedonian ancestors, their numbers and influence began to decline. Like the Romans of Italy, Gaul, and Spain, the Greeks of Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia destroyed themselves.

It is now necessary to enter on a more minute

inquiry into the causes which affected the social condition of the native Greeks, since their secluded position in the empire almost conceals them from the tract of the political historian. The principal causes of the decline of Greece have been already explained; but the tone of society in the country, and the manner of living adopted by the upper and middling ranks, must not be overlooked, in tracing the progress of national decay. During the disorders of the civil wars, while the Roman generals were distributing the accumulated treasures of numerous sovereigns in order to gain partizans, not only was the value of the precious metals very much reduced, but enormous fortunes also were made by many Greeks; and a scale of expense was adopted, by all those who were connected with the administration, which individuals were never prudent enough to diminish before the resources of the land had declined, and the value of money had risen. It has been already remarked, that the increase of wealth consequent on the Macedonian conquests, had tended to augment the size of private properties, and to add to the numbers of slaves in Greece. Under the Romans, the general riches of the country were indeed very much diminished; but individuals were enabled to acquire fortunes greater than had been possessed by the ancient monarchs, and to possess estates larger than the territories of many celebrated republics. Julius Eurycles owned a province, and Herodes Atticus could have purchased a kingdom. While a few individuals could amass unbounded wealth, the bulk of the people were prevented from acquiring even a moderate independency; and when Plutarch

says that Greece, in his time, could not arm more than three thousand *hoplitæ*, though the small states of Sicyon and Megara each furnished that number at the battle of Platea, it is necessary to remember the change which had taken place in the size of private properties, as well as the altered state of society, for both tended to diminish the numbers of the free population.\* The taxes of Greece were remitted to Rome, and expended beyond the limits of the province. The most useful public works were neglected, except when a benevolent emperor like Hadrian, or a wealthy individual like Herodes Atticus, thought fit to direct some portion of their expenditure to what was useful as well as ornamental. Under a continuance of such circumstances, Greece was drained of money.

The poverty of Greece was farther increased by the gradual rise in the value of the precious metals, —an evil which began to be generally felt about the time of Nero, and which affected Greece with great severity, from the altered distribution of wealth in the country, and the loss of its foreign commerce. Greece had once been rich in mines, which had been a source of wealth and prosperity to Siphnos and Atticus, and had laid the foundation of the power of Philip of Macedon. Gold and silver mines, when their produce is regarded as articles of commerce, are a surer basis of wealth than mines of lead and copper. The evils which have arisen in the countries where they have been produced, have proceeded from the fiscal regulations of the govern-

\* *De Oraculis.*

ment. The fiscal measures of the Romans soon rendered it a ruinous speculation for private individuals to attempt working mines of the precious metals, and, in the hands of the state, they soon proved unprofitable. Many mines were exhausted; and even though the value of the precious metals was enhanced, some, beyond the influence of the Roman power, were abandoned from those causes which, after the second century of the Christian era, produced a sensible diminution in the commercial transactions of the old hemisphere.\*

Greece suffered in the general decay; her commerce and manufactures, being confined to supplying the consumption of a diminished and impoverished population, sank into insignificance. It may be observed, that in a declining state of society, where political, financial, and commercial causes combine to diminish the wealth of a nation, it is difficult for individuals to alter their manner of life, and to restrict their expenditure, with the promptitude necessary to escape ruin. It is indeed seldom in their power to estimate the progress of the decay; and a reasonable jointure, or a necessary mortgage, often achieves the ruin of a family.

In this declining state of society, complaints of the excess of luxury are generally prevalent, and the Greek writers of the second century are filled with lamentations on this subject. Such complaints, however, when applied to Greece, do not prove that the majority of the higher classes were living in a manner injurious to society, either from their effeminacy or

\* JACOB'S *Historical Inquiry into the Production and Consumption of the Precious Metals*, i. 35. 42.



vicious expenditure. They only shew that the greater part of the incomes of private persons was consumed by their personal expenditure; and that a due proportion was not set apart for creating new productive property, in order to replace the deterioration, which time is ever causing in that which already exists. People of property, when their annual incomes proved insufficient for their personal expenditure, began to borrow money, instead of trying to diminish their expenses. An accumulation of debts became general throughout the country, and formed an extensive evil in the time of Plutarch.\* These debts were partly caused by the oppression of the Roman government, and by the chicanery of the fiscal officers, always pressing for ready money, and were generally contracted to Roman money-lenders. It was, in this way, that the Roman administration produced its most injurious effects in the provinces, by affording to one class the means of accumulating enormous wealth, and by forcing another into abject poverty. The property of the Greek debtors was at last transferred, to a very great extent, to the Roman creditors. This transference, which, in a homogeneous society, might have invigorated the upper classes, by substituting an industrious timocracy for an idle aristocracy, had a very different effect. It introduced new feelings of rivalry and extravagance, by filling the country with foreign landlords. The Greeks could not long maintain the struggle, and they sank gradually lower and lower in wealth, until their poverty introduced

\* Περὶ τοῦ μὴ δάνειζέσθαι. De vitando aere alieno.

an altered state of society, and taught them the prudential and industrious habits of small proprietors, in which tranquil position they escape, not only from the eye of history, but even from antiquarian research.

It is difficult to convey a correct notion of the evils and demoralization produced by private debts in the ancient world, though they often appear as one of the most powerful agents in political revolutions, and were a constant subject of attention to the statesman and the lawgiver. Modern society has completely annihilated their political effects. The greater facilities now afforded to the transference of landed property, and the ease with which capital now circulates, have given an extension to the operations of banking, and remedied this peculiar defect in society. It must be noticed, too, that the ancients regarded landed property as the accessory of the citizen, though it might determine his rank in the commonwealth; but the moderns view the proprietor as the accessory of the landed property, and the political franchise, being inherent in the estate, as lost by the citizen who alienates his property.

In closing this view of the state of the Greek people under the imperial government, it is impossible not to feel, that Greece cannot be included in the general assertion of Gibbon, that "if a man were called to fix the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death

of Domitian to the accession of Commodus,"\* It may be doubted whether the Roman government ever relaxed the systematic oppression under which the agricultural and commercial population of its provinces groaned; and even Hadrian himself can hardly claim greater merit, than that of having humanely administered a system radically bad, and endeavoured to correct its most prominent features of injustice. Greece, indeed, reached its lowest degree of misery and depopulation about the time of Vespasian; but still there is ample testimony in the pages of cotemporary writers, to prove that the desolate state of the country was not materially improved for a long period, and that only partial signs of amelioration were apparent in the period so much vaunted by Gibbon.† The liberality of Hadrian, and the munificence of Herodes Atticus, were isolated examples, and could not change the constitution of Rome. The splendid edifices of antiquity repaired by these two benefactors of Greece, though works of public utility, had remained neglected on account of the poverty of the diminished population of the country; and many of their works contributed little more to the well-being of the people, than the wages of the labour expended on their construction. The roads and aqueducts of Hadrian are wise exceptions,—as they diminished the expenses of transport, and afforded increased facilities

\* *Decline and Fall*, i. 126. The state of Egypt was almost as bad as that of Greece.—ARISTIDES, *Orat. Egypt.* Compare MILLMAN'S *History of Christianity*, vol. i. Book ii. c. vii.

† PLUTARCH, LUCIAN, PAUSANIAS, PHILOSTRATUS.

for production. Still the sumptuous edifices, of which remains still exist, indicate that the object of building was the erection of magnificent monuments—to commemorate the taste and splendour of the founder.

The condition of a declining population by no means implies, that any portion of the people is actually suffering from want of the necessities of life. A sudden change in the direction of commerce, and a considerable decrease in the demand for the productions of manufacturing industry, must indeed, at the time when such events occur, deprive numbers of their usual means of subsistence, and create great misery, before the population suffer the ultimate diminution which these causes necessitate. But, when the chief bulk of a country's productions is drawn from its own soil, and consumed by its own inhabitants, the population may be in a declining condition, without the circumstance being suspected for some time, either at home or abroad. The chief cause of the deterioration of the national resources, will then be found to arise from the whole society's consuming too great a proportion of their annual income, without dedicating a due portion of their revenues to reproduction; in short, from living up to their incomes, without endeavouring to create new sources of income, or striving to augment the old. Greece suffered from all the causes alluded to; her commerce and manufactures were transferred to other lands, and her inhabitants resolved to enjoy life, instead of usefully employing their time. But this diminution in the wealth of the

people requires to be noticed, as laying the foundation for a great step in the improvement of the human species. Poverty rendered slavery less frequent, and destroyed many of the channels by which the slave trade had flourished. The condition of the slaves also underwent several modifications, as the barrier between the slave and the citizen was broken down. At this favourable conjuncture Christianity stepped in, to prevent injustice from ever recovering the ground which humanity had gained.

Under oppressive governments, the person sometimes becomes more insecure than property. This appears to have been the case under the Roman, as it has since been under the Turkish government; and the population, in such cases, decreases much more rapidly than property is destroyed. The inhabitants of Greece under the Roman empire, found themselves possessed of buildings, gardens, vineyards, olive plantations, and all the agricultural produce which the capital of former ages had been able to produce, to an extent capable of maintaining a numerous population. The want of commerce, neglected roads, the rarity of the precious metals in circulation, and the difficulties thrown in the way of petty traffic, by injudicious legislation, rendered the surplus produce of each separate district of little value. The inhabitants enjoyed the mere necessities of life, and some of the luxuries of their climate in great abundance, but when they looked at the productions of art, and foreign commerce, they felt themselves to be poor. Such a state of society

inevitably introduces a system of wasting what is superfluous, and of neglecting the means of future production. In this condition of indifference and ease, the population of Greece remained, until the weakness of the Roman government, and the disorders of the army, opened a way for the northern nations into the heart of the empire.

SECTION XII. — INFLUENCE OF RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY ON SOCIETY.

THE earliest records of the Greeks, represent them as living completely free from the despotic authority of a priestly class. The natural consequence of this freedom from an irrefragable decision on matters of religious opinion, was an indefinite latitude in the dogmas of the national faith: and the priesthood, as it existed, became a very incorrect interpreter of public opinion in religious questions. The belief in the gods of Olympus, had been shaken as early as in the age of Pericles, and had undergone many modifications, after the Macedonian conquests. From the time the Romans became masters of Greece, the majority of the educated were votaries of the different philosophical sects,—every one of which viewed the established religion as a mere popular delusion. But the Roman government, and the municipal authorities, continued to support the various religions of the different provinces in their legal rights, though the priesthood generally enjoyed this support, rather in their

character of constituted corporations, than because they were regarded as spiritual guides. The amount of their revenues, and the extent of their civic rights and privileges, alone engaged the attention of the magistrate.

The wealth and number of the religious establishments in Greece, and the large funds possessed by corporations, which were appropriated to private festivals, contributed, in no small degree, to encourage idleness among the people, and perpetuate a taste for extravagance. The great festivals of the Olympic, Pythic, and Isthmian games, in so far as they served to unite the whole Greek nation in a common place of assembly for national objects, were, indeed, productive of some advantage. They contributed to maintain a general standard of public opinion throughout the Hellenic race, and they kept up a feeling of nationality. But the dissipation occasioned by the multitude of local religious feasts, and the extravagant public amusements celebrated at the expense of the funds belonging to the temples, produced the most injurious effects on society.

The privilege, called the right of asylum, which was enjoyed by some ancient temples, tended to encourage the open violation of every principle of justice. This privilege conferred the power of protecting all criminals who sought shelter in the sanctuary. The fear of punishment, and the strength of moral obligations, were both destroyed by this impunity openly granted to the most heinous crimes. This abuse had extended to such a degree under the Roman government, that Tiberius found it necessary

to mitigate the evil; but many shrines were allowed to retain the right of asylum to a much later period.\*

Though ancient superstitions were still practised, old religious feelings were extinct. The oracles, which had once formed the most remarkable of the sacred institutions of the Greeks, had fallen into decay.† It is, however, incorrect to suppose, that the Pythoness ceased to deliver her responses from the time of our Saviour's birth, for she was consulted by the emperors long after. Many oracles continued to be in considerable repute, even after the introduction of Christianity, in Greece. Pausanias mentions the oracle of Mallos in Cilicia, as the most veracious in his time.‡ Claros and Didymi were famous, and much consulted in the time of Lucian; and even new oracles were commenced as a profitable speculation.§ The oracles continued to give their responses to fervent votaries, long after they had fallen into general neglect. Julian endeavoured to revive their influence, and he consulted those of Delphi, Delos, and Dodona, concerning the result of his Persian expedition.|| He vainly attempted to restore Delphi and Daphne near Antioch, to their ancient splendour.¶ Even so late as the reign of Theodosius the Great, those of Delphi, Didymi, and Jupiter Ammon were in existence, but from that

\* TACITUS, *Ann.* iii. 60. *Crebrescebat enim Græcas per urbes licentia atque impunitas asyla statuendi.* Ibid. iv. 14.

† PLUTARCH, *de orac. defect.* vii. 709. ed. Tauch. ‡ *Attica.* xxxiv. 2.

§ LUCIAN'S *Alexander and Peregrinus.*

|| THEODORETUS, *Hist. Eccles.* iii. 16.

¶ CEDRENIUS, *Hist. Comp.* p. 304. AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS, xxii. 12.



period, they became utterly silent.\* The reverence which had formerly been paid to them, was transferred to astrologers, who were consulted by all ranks and on all occasions. Tiberius, Otho, Hadrian, and Severus, are all mentioned as votaries of this mode of searching into the secrets of futurity.† Yet hidden divination, to which astrology belonged, had been prohibited by the laws of the twelve tables, and was condemned both by express law and by the spirit of the Roman state religion. By the Greeks even, it was regarded as an illicit and disgraceful practice.‡

During the first century of the Christian era, the worship of Serapis made great progress in every part of the Roman empire. The fact deserves notice, as it indicates the annihilation of all reverence for the old system of paganism, and marks a desire, in the public mind, to search after those truths which the Christian dispensation soon after revealed. The religion of Serapis inculcated the existence of another world, and was held in profound reverence by a numerous body of votaries.

The speculations of the philosophers had first shaken the respect of the Greeks for the religion of their ancestors. The religion of the people was, however, so utterly worthless as a moral guide, that the worst effect of the destruction of its

\* See various authorities cited by VAN LIMBURG. BROUWER, *Histoire de la civilisation morale et religieuse des Grecs*, vol. 6. p. 32. SYMMACHEUS, *Epist.* iv. 35.

† TACITUS, *Ann.* vii. 20. *Hist.* i. 22. SPARTIANUS, HADRIAN, 2. SEVERUS, p. 65, ed. Paris, 1620.

‡ *Ars mathematica damnabilis est et interdicta omnino*, *Cod. Just.* 9. 8. 2. BONAMY, *Du rapport de la magie avec la théologie Païenne. Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions*, vii. 25.

influence, was the separation of the ethic and intellectual education of the higher and lower classes, which ensued as soon as the systems of the philosophers and priests were brought into direct opposition. In so far as the civilization of the Greek race was concerned, it was doubtless more effectually advanced by the formation of a national philosophy, than it could ever have been by the authority of a religion, so utterly destitute of intellectual power, and so compliant in its form, as that of Greece. The attention, which the Greeks always paid to philosophy and metaphysical speculation, is a curious feature in their mental character, and owes its origin in part, to the happy logical analogies of their native language; but in the days of Grecian independence, this was only a distinctive characteristic of a small portion of the cultivated minds in the nation. From that peculiar condition of society, which resulted from the existence of a number of small independent states, a larger portion of the nation was occupied with the higher branches of political business, than has ever been the case, in any other equally numerous body of mankind. Every city in Greece held the rank of a capital, and possessed its own statesmen and lawyers. The sense of this importance, and the weight of this responsibility, stimulated the Greeks to the extraordinary exertions of intellect with which their history is filled; for the strongest spur to exertion among men, is the existence of a duty imposed as a voluntary obligation.

The habits of social intercourse, and the simple manner of life, which prevailed in the Greek

republics, rendered the private conduct of every distinguished citizen as well known, and as constantly a subject of scrutiny, to his fellow-citizens, as his public career. This powerful agency of public opinion, served to enforce a conventional morality, which, though lax in its ethics, was at least imperative in its demands. But, when the international system of the Hellenic states was destroyed, when an altered condition of society had introduced greater privacy into the habits of social life, and put a stop to public intercourse among the citizens of the same region, by giving a marked prominence to the distinctions of rank and wealth, the private conduct of those, who were engaged in public life, was, in a great degree, withdrawn from the examination of the people; and the effect of public opinion was gradually weakened, as the grounds, on which it was formed, became less personal and characteristic.

Political circumstances began, about the same time, to weaken the efficacy of public opinion, in affairs of government and administration. The want of some substitute, to replace its powerful influence on the every-day conduct of man, was so imperiously felt, that one was eagerly sought for. Religion had long ceased to be a guide in morality; and men strove to find some feeling which would replace the forgotten fear of the gods, and that public opinion which could once inspire self respect.\* It was hoped, that philosophy could supply the want; and it was cultivated not only by the studious

\* TACITUS owns the confusion in his own feelings. — *Ann.* vi. 22. *Sed mihi, hæc ac talia audienti, in incerto judicium est, fato-ue res mortalium et necessitate immutabili, an forte volvantur.*

and the learned, but by the world at large, in the belief that the self-respect of the philosopher would prove a sure ground to pure morality, and inspire a deep sense of justice. The necessity of obtaining some permanent power over the moral conduct of mankind, was naturally suggested to the Greeks, by the political injustice under which they suffered; and the hope, that philosophical studies would temper the minds of their masters to equity, and awaken feelings of humanity in their hearts, could not fail to exert considerable influence. When the Romans themselves had fallen into a state of moral and political degradation, lower even than that of the Greeks, it is not surprising, that the educated classes should have cultivated philosophy with great eagerness, and with nearly similar views. The universal craving after justice and truth, affords a key to the profound respect, with which teachers of philosophy were regarded. Their authority and their character were so high, that they mixed with all ranks, and preserved their power, in spite of all the ridicule of the satirists. The general purity of their lives, and the justice of their conduct, were acknowledged, though a few may have been corrupted by court favour; and pretenders often assumed a long beard, and dirty garments, to act the monk and the jester, with greater effect, at the table of the wealthy Romans. The inadequacy of any philosophical opinions to produce the results required of them, was, at last, apparent in the changes and modifications which the various sects were constantly making in the tenets of their founders, and the vain attempts that were undertaken, to graft the paganism of the

past, on the modern systems of philosophy. The great principle of truth, which all were eagerly searching after, seemed to elude their grasp; yet these investigations were not without great use in improving the intellectual and moral condition of the higher orders, and rendering life tolerable, when the tyranny and anarchy of the imperial government threatened the destruction of society. They prepared the minds of men for listening candidly to a new religion, and rendered many of the votaries of philosophy the ready converts to the doctrines of Christianity.

Philosophy lent a splendour to the Greek name; yet, with the exception of Athens, learning and philosophy were but little cultivated in European Greece. The poverty of the inhabitants, and the secluded position of the country, induced few to dedicate their time to literary pursuits; and after the time of the Antonines, the wealthy cities of Asia, Syria, and Egypt, contained the real representatives of the intellectual supremacy of the Hellenic race. The Greeks of Europe, unnoticed by history, were carefully cherishing their national institutions; while, in the eyes of foreigners, the Greek character and fame depended on the civilization of an expatriated population, already declining in number, and hastening to extinction. The social institutions of the Greeks have, therefore, been more useful to them in a national point of view, than even their literature.

SECTION XIII.—THE SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE GREEKS  
AFFECTED BY THE WANT OF COLONIES OF EMIGRA-  
TION.

THE want of foreign colonies, created by emigration, and which admitted of a constant influx of new emigrants, must have exercised a powerful influence in arresting the progress of society in the Roman world. Rome never, like Phœnicia and Greece, permitted numerous bands of her citizens to depart from poverty in their own country, in order to better their fortunes in other lands. Her oligarchical constitution regarded the people as the property of the state. The civilization of the Romans followed only in the train of their armies, and stopped when the emperors ceased to pursue the system of conquest, which had previously engaged the energies, and increased the population of the state. Even before the policy of Augustus had established universal peace, and reduced the Roman army into a corps of gendarmerie, or armed police, for guarding the internal tranquillity of the provinces, or watching the peaceful frontiers, a combination of inherent defects, in the constitution of the Roman state, had begun to destroy the lower order of Roman citizens.\* The people required a new field of action, when the old was closed for ever, in order to engage their ener-

\* See the able examination of this subject in the *Economie Politique des Romains*, par DUREAU DE LA MALLE; and an excellent *Mémoire sur les secours publics chez les Romains*, par NAUDET. *Académie des Inscriptions*, nouv. coll. tom. xiii.

gies in active pursuits, and prevent them from pining away in poverty and idleness. The want of colonies of emigration, at this conjuncture, kept all the evil elements of the population fermenting within the state. The want of some distant spot, connected with the past history of their race, but freed from the existing social restrictions which weighed heavily on the minds of the ambitious and the proud, compelled the Romans to make their way in society as they were able, and it affords some explanation of the composition of the imperial armies, into which all the unquiet elements of society removed.

Foreign colonies were but ill replaced, by the practice adopted by the Roman citizens of seeking their fortunes in Spain, Gaul, and Britain; though that species of emigration long tended to preserve an impulse towards improvement, in the western portion of the Roman empire. The policy of the emperors was directed to render society stationary; and it escaped the observaton of profound statesmen, like Augustus and Tiberius, that the most efficient means of securing it from decline, consisted in the formation of a regular demand on the population, by permitting emigration. Foreign colonization was, however, adverse to all the prejudices of a Roman. The policy and religion of the state were equally opposed to the residence of any citizen beyond the bounds of the empire; and the constant diminution of the inhabitants of Italy, which had accompanied the extended conquests of the republic, seemed to indicate, that the great duty of the masters of Italy was to encourage an increase

of the people, which they could hardly suppose could be promoted by emigration.

The decline in the population of Italy, proceeded from evils inherent in the political system of the Roman government, and which exercised their influence in the Grecian provinces of the empire, but which can only be traced, with historical accuracy, in their details, close to the centre of the executive power. The system of administration in the republic had always tended to aggrandize the aristocracy, who talked much of glory, but thought constantly of wealth. When the conquests of Rome were extended over all the richest countries of the ancient world, the leading families accumulated incredible riches, — riches, indeed, far exceeding the wealth of modern sovereigns. Villas and parks were formed over all Italy on a scale of the most sumptuous grandeur, and land became more valuable as hunting grounds, than as productive farms. The same habits were introduced into the provinces.\* In the neighbourhood of Rome, agriculture was ruined by the public distributions of grain received as tribute from the provinces, and by the bounty granted to importing merchants to secure a maximum price of bread.† The same system again prevailed in the provinces; and public distributions at Alexandria and Antioch must have proved equally injurious. Another cause of the decline in the population of the empire, was the great increase of the slaves, which took place on the rapid

\* *Latifundia perdidere Italiam, jam vero et provincias.* PLINY, *Hist. Nat.* xvii. 7. 3. TACITUS, *Ann.* iii. 54.

† Suetonius, *Aug.* 42.



conquests of the Romans, and the diffusion of the immense treasures which they expended. There is a considerable waste of productive industry among a slave population; and free labourers cease to exist, rather than perpetuate their race, when degraded to the same level in society as the slaves. When the insecurity of property and person under the Roman government, and the corrupt state of society, are added to these various causes of decay, the decline and depopulation of the empire does not require farther explanation.

Yet society would not, probably, have declined as it did, under the weight of the Roman power, had the active, intelligent, and virtuous members of the middle classes possessed the means of escaping from a social position, so calculated to excite feelings of despair. But it is in vain to offer conjectures on the subject; for the vice in the Roman constitution, which rendered all their military and state colonies merely sources of aggrandizement to the aristocracy, may have proceeded from some inherent defect in the social notions of the people; and, consequently, might have entailed ruin on any Roman society, established beyond the authority of the senate or the emperors. The social organization of nations affects their vitality, as much as their political constitution affects their power and fortunes.

The exclusively Roman feeling, which was adverse to all foreign colonization, was first attacked when Christianity spread itself beyond the limits of the empire. The fact, that Christianity was not identical with citizenship, or, at least, with subjection to Rome, was a powerful cause of creating that adverse

feeling towards the Christians, which branded them as enemies of the human race; for, in the mouth of a Roman, the human race was a phrase for the empire of Rome, and the Christians were really persecuted by emperors like Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, because they were regarded as having little attachment to the Roman government, and because their humanity was stronger than their citizenship.

SECTION XIV.—EFFECTS PRODUCED IN GREECE BY THE  
INROADS OF THE GOTHs.

AFTER the reign of Caracalla, the whole attention of the Roman government was absorbed in the necessity of defending the empire against the invasions of the northern nations. Two centuries of communication with the Roman world, had extended the effects of incipient civilization throughout all the north of Europe. Trade had created new wants, and given a new impulse to society. This state of improvement always causes a rapid increase of population, and awakens a spirit of enterprise, which makes the apparent increase even greater than the real. The history of every people which has attained any eminence in the annals of mankind, has been marked by a similar period of activity. The Greeks, the Romans, and the Arabs, poured out a succession of armies, which must have astonished the nations which they attacked, quite as much as the apparently inexhaustible armies of the Goths, amazed the degenerate Romans. Yet few events, in the whole

course of history, seem more extraordinary than the success of the uncivilized Goths, against the well disciplined legions of imperial Rome, and their successful inroads into the thickly-peopled provinces of the Roman empire. The causes of the success of the Goths are evidently to be sought within the empire; the oppression of the provincials, the disorder in the finances, and the relaxation in the discipline of the troops, contributed more to their victories than their own strength or military skill. If any national feeling, or common political interest, had connected the people, the army, and the sovereign, the Roman empire would have easily repulsed the attacks of all its enemies; nay, had the government not arrested the natural progress of its subjects, by vicious legislation and corrupt administration, the barbarous inhabitants of Germany, Poland, and Russia, could no more have resisted the force of Roman civilization, than those of Spain, Gaul, and Britain. But this task required to be supported by the energy of national feeling; it was far beyond the strength of the imperial, or any other central government. The ablest of the despots, who styled themselves the world's masters, durst not, though nourished in camps, attempt a career of foreign conquest; and these imperial soldiers were satisfied with the inglorious task, of preserving the limits of the empire without diminution. Even Severus, after he had consolidated a systematic despotism, based on military power, did not aspire at extending the empire. This avowed inability of the Roman armies to make any farther progress, invited the barbarians to attack the provinces. If a band of

assailants proved successful in breaking through the Roman lines, they were sure of considerable plunder. If they were repulsed, they could generally evade pursuit. These incursions became the employment of armies and nations; and, to the timid eye of the unwarlike and unarmed citizen of the empire, the whole population of the north appeared to be constantly on its march, to plunder and enslave the wealthy and peaceable inhabitants of the south.

Various means of defence were employed by the reigning sovereigns. Alexander Severus secured the tranquillity of the frontiers, by paying subsidies to the barbarians. Decius fell, defending the provinces against an immense army of Goths, which had penetrated into the heart of Mœsia; and Gallus purchased the retreat of the victors, by engaging to pay an annual tribute. The disorder in the Roman government increased, the succession of emperors became more rapid, and the numbers of the invaders augmented. Various tribes and nations, called, by the Greeks and Romans, Scythians and Goths, and belonging to the great families now called the Slavonic and Germanic stock, under the names of East and West Goths, Vandals, Heruls, Borans, Karps, Penks, and Urugunds, crossed the Danube.\* Their incursions were pushed through Mœsia into Thrace and Macedonia; an immense booty was carried away, and a greater amount of property destroyed; thousands of the industrious inhabitants were reduced to slavery, and a far greater number massacred by the cruelty of the invaders.

\* ZOSIMUS, i. 31. 42.

The Greeks were awakened, by these invasions, from the state of lethargy in which they had reposed for three centuries. They began to repair the long neglected fortifications of their towns, and muster their city guards and rural police, for a conflict in defence of their property. Cowardice had long been supposed, by the Romans, to be an incurable vice of the Greeks. The Greeks had been compelled to appear before the Romans with an obsequious and humble mean, and every worthless Roman had thence arrogated to himself a fancied superiority. But the truth is, that all the middling classes in the Roman world had, from the time of Augustus, become averse from sacrificing their ease, for the doubtful glory to be gained in the imperial service. No patriotic feeling drew men to the camp; and the allurements of ambition were stifled by obscurity of station and hopelessness of promotion. The young nobility of Rome, when called upon to serve in the legions, after the defeat of Varrus, displayed signs of cowardice unparalleled in the history of Greece. Like the Fellahs of modern Egypt, they cut off their thumbs in order to escape military service.\* Greece could contribute but little to the defence of the empire; but Caracalla had drawn from Sparta some troops, who had joined the legions on the Danube.† Decius, before his defeat, had ordered the proconsul of Achæa to leave a garrison of about fifteen hundred men in his province, to defend the passes of Thermopylæ, and the Isthmus of Corinth.‡ The

\* SUTONIUS, in *Aug.* 24.

† HERODIAN, iv. 8.

‡ These troops consisted of 200 Dardanians, 100 heavy armed soldiers, 160 cavalry, 60 Cretan bowmen, and 1000 newly enrolled troops of the line. TREBELLIVS POLLIO. *Claud.* 16.

smallness of the number is curious, and seems to indicate the tranquil condition of the Hellenic population.

The preparations for defending the country were actively carried on, both in northern Greece and at the isthmus; and it was not long before the Greeks were called upon to prove the efficiency of their warlike arrangements.\* A body of Goths, having seized the Taunic Chersonnesus, which then formed the independent kingdom of Bosphorus, commenced a series of naval expeditions, against the southern shores of the Black Sea. They soon penetrated through the Thracian Bosphorus, and, aided by additional bands who had proceeded from the banks of the Danube by land, they marched into Asia Minor, and plundered Chalcedon, Nicomedia, Nicea, and Prusa. This successful enterprise was soon followed by still more daring expeditions.

In the year 267, another fleet, consisting of five hundred vessels, manned chiefly by the Goths and Heruls, passed the Bosphorus and the Hellespont. They seized Byzantium and Chrysopolis, and advanced, plundering the islands and coasts of the Egean Sea, and laying waste many of the principal cities of the Peloponnesus. Cyzicus, Lemnos, Scyros, Corinth, Sparta, and Argos, are named as having suffered by their ravages.\* From the time of Sylla's conquest of Athens, a period of nearly three hundred and fifty years had elapsed, during which, Attica had hardly been visited by the evils of war; yet when the Athenians were

\* SYNCELLI, *Chron.* 381.

† *Ib.* 382.

called upon to defend their homes against the Goths, they displayed a spirit worthy of their ancient fame. An officer, named Cleodamus, had been sent by the government from Byzantium to Athens, in order to repair the fortifications, some time before this invasion of the Heruls; but a division of these Goths landed at the Piræus, and succeeded in carrying Athens by storm, before any means were taken for its defence. Dexippus, an Athenian of rank in the Roman service, soon contrived to reassemble the garrison of the Acropolis; and by joining to it such of the citizens as possessed some knowledge of military discipline, or some spirit for warlike enterprise, he formed a little army of two thousand men. By choosing a strong position in the Olive Grove, Dexippus circumscribed the movements of the Goths, and so harassed them by a close blockade, that they were soon compelled to abandon Athens. Cleodamus, in the meantime, had assembled a few ships, and obtained a naval victory over a division of the barbarian fleet.\* These reverses were a prelude to the ruin of the Goths. A Roman fleet entered the Archipelago, and a Roman army, under the emperor Gallienus, marched into Illyricum; the separate divisions of the Gothic expedition were every where overtaken by these forces, and destroyed in detail. During this invasion of the empire, one of the divisions of the Gothic army crossed the Hellespont into Asia, and succeeded in plundering the cities of Troy and Ilium,

\* ZONARAS, xii. 26. vol. i. p. 635. ZINKEISEN (*Geschichte Griechenlands*) judiciously corrects the chronology of Zonaras, p. 591, note.

and in destroying the celebrated temple of Diana of Ephesus.

Dexippus was himself the historian of the Gothic invasion of Attica, but unfortunately little information on the subject can be collected from the fragments of his work which now exist.\* There is a celebrated anecdote connected with this incursion, which throws some light on the state of the Athenian population, and on the conduct of the Gothic invaders of the empire. The fact of its currency is a proof of the easy circumstances, in which the Athenians lived, of the literary idleness in which they indulged, and the general mildness of the assailants, whose sole object was plunder. It is said, that the Goths, when they had captured Athens, were preparing to burn the splendid libraries which adorned the city; but that a Gothic soldier dissuaded them, by telling his countrymen that it was better that the Athenians should continue to waste their time over their books, than that they should begin to occupy themselves with warlike exercises. Gibbon, indeed, thinks the anecdote may be suspected as the fanciful conceit of a recent sophist; and he adds, that the sagacious counsellor reasoned like an ignorant barbarian.† But even the Greeks, who repeated the anecdote, seem to have thought that there was more sound sense in the arguments of the Goth, than the great historian is willing to admit. The mere reading and study of the most learned, does not always render men wiser,

\* *Corpus Scriptorum Historiæ Byzantinæ*. DEXIPPUS, EUNAPIUS, &c. Bonn. 1829.

† *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, i. 434. ZONARAS, i. 635.



and generally proves injurious to their bodily activity. When literary pursuits, therefore, become the exclusive object of national ambition, and the abstract speculations of science engage the sole attention of the higher ranks, effeminacy is more likely to prevail, than when literature is used as an instrument for advancing practical acquirements, and embellishing active occupations. The rude Goths themselves would have admired the poetry of Homer and of Pindar, though they despised the metaphysical learning of the schools of Athens.

The celebrity of Athens, and the presence of the historian Dexippus, have given to this incursion of the barbarians a prominent place in history; but many expeditions are casually mentioned, which must have inflicted greater losses on the Greeks, and spread more widely the devastation of the country. These inroads must have produced important changes on the condition of the Greek population, and given a new impulse to society. The passions of men were called into action, and the protection of their property often depended on their own exertions. Public spirit was again awakened, and many cities of Greece successfully defended their walls against the immense armies of barbarians, who broke into the empire in the reign of Claudius. Thessalonica and Cassandra were attacked by land and sea. Thessaly and Greece were invaded; but the walls of the towns were generally found in a state of repair, and the inhabitants ready to defend them. The great victory obtained by the emperor Claudius II. at Naissus, broke the power of the Goths; and a Roman fleet in the Archipelago destroyed the

remains of their naval forces. The extermination of these invaders of Greece, was completed by the great plague which ravaged the East for fifteen years.

During the repeated invasions of the barbarians, an immense number of slaves were either destroyed by war, or carried away by the Goths beyond the Danube. Great facilities were likewise afforded to dissatisfied slaves to escape and join the invaders. The numbers of the slave population in Greece must, therefore, have undergone a reduction, which could not prove otherwise than beneficial to those who remained, and which must also have produced a very considerable change on the condition of the poorer freemen. The danger in which men lived, necessitated an alteration in their mode of life; every one was compelled to think of defending his person, as well as his property; new activity was infused into society; the losses caused by the ravages of the Goths, and the mortality produced by the plague, were soon replaced by a general improvement in the circumstances of the inhabitants of Greece.

It must here be observed, that the first great inroads of the northern nations, which succeeded in penetrating into the heart of the Roman empire, were directed against the eastern provinces, and that Greece suffered severely by the earliest of the invasions; yet the eastern portion of the empire alone succeeded in driving back the barbarians, and preserving its population free from any admixture of the Gothic race. This successful resistance was chiefly owing to the national feelings and political organization of the Greek people. The institutions

which the Greeks retained, prevented them from remaining utterly hopeless in the moment of danger; the magistrates possessed a legitimate authority to take measures for any extraordinary crisis, and citizens of wealth and talent could render their services useful, without any violent departure from the usual forms of the local administration.\* The evil of anarchy was not, in Greece, added to the misfortune of invasion. Fortunately for the Greeks, the insignificance of their military forces prevented the national feelings, which these measures aroused, from giving umbrage either to the Roman emperors, or to their military officers in the provinces.

From the various accounts of the Gothic wars of this period which exist, it is evident, that the expeditions of the barbarians were, as yet, only undertaken for the purpose of plundering the provinces. The invaders entertained no idea of being able to establish themselves permanently within the bounds of the empire. The celerity of their movements generally made their numbers appear greater than they really were; while the inferiority of their arms and discipline rendered them an unequal match for a much smaller body of the heavy-armed Romans. When the invaders met with a steady and well combined resistance, they were defeated without much difficulty; but whenever a moment of neglect presented itself, their attacks were repeated with undiminished courage. The victorious reigns of Claudius the Second, Aurelian, and Probus, prove the immense superiority of the Roman armies

\* *Cod. Justinianus*, viii. 9. 1; xi. 29. 4, and 41. 1; x. 41. 10.

when properly commanded; but the custom, which was constantly gaining ground, of recruiting the legions from among the barbarians, reveals the deplorable state of depopulation and weakness to which three centuries of despotism and bad administration had reduced the empire.\* On the one hand, the government feared the spirit of its subjects, if intrusted with arms; and on the other, it was unwilling to reduce the number of the citizens paying taxes, by draughting too large a proportion of the industrious classes into the army. The danger of revolt, and the defence of the empire, seemed to the Roman emperors, to demand the maintenance of a larger army than the population of their own dominions could supply.

SECTION XV. — CHANGES WHICH PRECEDED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSTANTINOPLE AS THE CAPITAL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

FOREIGN invasions, the disorderly state of the army, the weight of the taxes, and the irregular constitution of the imperial government, produced, at this time, a general feeling, that the army and the state required a new organization, in order to adapt both to the exigencies of altered circumstances, and save the empire from impending ruin. Probus, Diocletian, and Constantine, appeared as reformers of the Roman empire. The history of these reforms belongs to the records of the Roman constitution,

\* AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS, xix. 2; xxxi. 4. 10. SPANHEIM, *Orbis Romanus*, p. 508.

as they were conceived with very little reference to the institutions of the provinces; and only some portion of the modifications made in the form of the imperial administration, will fall within the scope of this work. But though the administrative reforms produced little change in the condition of the Greek population, the Greeks themselves actively contributed to effect a mighty revolution, in the whole frame of social life, by the organization which they gave to the church, from the moment they began to embrace the Christian religion. It must not be overlooked, that the Greeks had organized a Christian church, before Christianity became the established religion of the empire.

The reign of Constantine marks the period in which old Roman political feelings lost their power, and the superstitious veneration for Rome herself declines. The liberty afforded for new ideas, and a new social organization, was not overlooked by the Greeks. The transference of the seat of government to Byzantium, destroyed the Roman spirit in the public administration. The Romans, indeed, from the establishment of the imperial government, had ceased to form a homogeneous nation, or to be connected, by feelings of attachment and interest, to one common country; and as soon as the rights of Roman citizenship had been conferred on the provincials, Rome became a mere ideal country to the majority of Romans. The Roman citizens, however, in many provinces, formed a caste of civilized society, dwelling among a number of ruder natives, and not melted into the mass of the population. In the Grecian provinces, no such

distinction prevailed. The Greeks had taken on themselves the name and the position of Roman citizens, but they retained their own language, manners, and institutions ; and as soon as Byzantium became the capital of the empire, they struggled to render it a Greek, and not a Latin city.

Constantine himself does not appear to have perceived this tendency of the Greek population to acquire a predominant influence in the East, and to supplant the language and manners of Rome, and he modelled his new capital entirely after Roman ideas and prejudices. Constantinople was, at its foundation, a Roman city, and Latin was the language of the higher ranks of its inhabitants. This fact must not be lost sight of ; for it affords an explanation of the opposition which is often apparent in the feelings, as well as the interests, of the capital and the Greek nation. Constantinople was a creation of imperial favour, and a regard to its own advantage rendered it subservient to despotism, and, for a long period, impervious to any national feeling. The inhabitants enjoyed exemptions from taxation, and received distributions of grain and provisions, so that the misery of the empire, and the desolation of the provinces, hardly affected them. Left at leisure to enjoy the games of the circus, they were bribed by government to pay little attention to the affairs of the empire. Such was the position of the people of Constantinople at the time of its foundation, and such it continued for many centuries.

## CHAPTER II.

## FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSTANTINOPLE AS CAPITAL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE, TO THE ACCESSION OF JUSTINIAN, A. D. 330 — 527.

CONSTANTINE, IN REFORMING THE GOVERNMENT, PLACED THE ADMINISTRATION IN DIRECT HOSTILITY WITH THE PEOPLE — THE CONDITION OF THE GREEKS WAS NOT IMPROVED BY CONSTANTINE'S REFORMS — CHANGES PRODUCED IN THE SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE GREEKS BY THE ALLIANCE OF CHRISTIANITY WITH THEIR NATIONAL USAGES — THE ORTHODOX CHURCH BECAME IDENTIFIED WITH THE GREEK NATION — CONDITION OF THE GREEK POPULATION OF THE EMPIRE, FROM THE REIGN OF CONSTANTINE, TO THAT OF THEODOSIUS THE GREAT — COMMUNICATION OF THE GREEKS WITH COUNTRIES BEYOND THE BOUNDS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE — EFFECT OF THE COMPLETE SEPARATION OF THE EASTERN FROM THE WESTERN EMPIRE ON THE GREEK NATION — ATTEMPTS OF THE GOTH'S TO ESTABLISH THEMSELVES IN GREECE — THE NATIONAL FEELINGS OF THE GREEKS ARRESTED THE CONQUESTS OF THE NORTHERN BARBARIANS — DECLINING CONDITION OF THE GREEK POPULATION IN THE EUROPEAN PROVINCES OF THE EASTERN EMPIRE — TENDENCY TO YIELD TO THE INFLUENCE OF PUBLIC OPINION DISPLAYED BY THE EMPERORS WHO REIGNED FROM THE DEATH OF ARCADIOUS TO THE ACCESSION OF JUSTINIAN — STATE OF CIVILIZATION, AND INFLUENCE OF NATIONAL FEELINGS.

SECTION I. — CONSTANTINE, IN REFORMING THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE, PLACED THE ADMINISTRATION IN DIRECT HOSTILITY TO THE PEOPLE.

THE warlike frenzy of the Romans rendered the emperors, from commanders of the army, masters of the state. But the soldiers, as soon as they fully

comprehended the extent of their power in conferring the imperial dignity, strove to make the emperors their agents in the management of the empire, of which they considered themselves the real proprietors. The army was consequently the branch of the government, to which all the others were considered subordinate. The disorders committed, and the defeats experienced, by the troops, at last weakened their influence, and forced the emperors to make various endeavours to reduce the army into a mere instrument of the imperial authority, and to destroy its power in the disposal of the imperial dignity. Two great measures of reform had been contemplated by several of the predecessors of Constantine. Severus had sought to put an end to the civil authority of the senate in the administration of the empire, and to efface the remains of the ancient political constitution. Diocletian had endeavoured to deprive the army of the power of choosing and of dethroning the sovereign; but until the reign of Constantine, the empire was entirely a military state, and the chief characteristic of the imperial dignity was the military command. Constantine first moulded the measures of reform of preceding emperors into a new system of government, and completed the political edifice of a new state, by remodelling the army, reconstituting the executive power, creating a new capital, and adopting a new religion. Unfortunately for the bulk of mankind, Constantine, when he commenced his plan of reform, was, from his situation, unconnected with the popular or national sympathies of any class of his subjects, and considered this state



of isolation, to be the surest basis of the imperial power, and the best guarantee for the impartial administration of justice.\*

The emperors had long ceased to regard themselves as belonging to any particular country, and the imperial government was no longer influenced by any attachment to the feelings or institutions of ancient Rome. The glories of the republic were forgotten, in the constant and laborious duty of administering and defending the empire. New maxims of policy had been formed, and in cases where the earlier emperors would have remembered their feelings as citizens of Rome, as well as their policy as sovereigns, the wisest counsellors of Constantine would have calmly appealed to the dictates of general expediency. In the eyes of the emperors, that which their subjects considered as national, was only provincial; and the history, language, and religion of Greece, Rome, Egypt, or Syria, were merely distinctive characteristics of these different portions of the empire. The emperor, the government, and the army, stood apart, completely separated from the hopes, fears, and interests of the body of the people. Constantine organized the centralization of every branch of the executive power in the person of the emperor, and, at the same time, framed a bureaucracy in the administration of each department of public business, in order to guard against the effects of the incapacity or folly of any future sovereign. No more perfect machine of government appears ever to have been established;

\* GIBBON, in his seventeenth chapter, has an admirable review of Constantine's policy.

and had it combined any principle capable of enforcing responsibility on the public servants, it might have proved perpetual. It is true, that according to the moral laws of the universe, a government ought to be so constituted, as to be conformable to the principles of truth and justice; but according to the theory of expediency, it is sufficient for the internal security of a state, that its political constitution compels the government to act in such a manner, that the people are persuaded that its conduct is dictated by a sense of justice. No foreign enemy ever assailed the Roman empire, that could not have been repulsed with ease, had the government and the people formed a united body, acting always for the general interest. Constantine, unfortunately, formed his government into a caste separate from the people, and thus placed it, from the very nature of man, in opposition to the mass of his subjects. In his desire to save the world from anarchy, he created that struggle between the administration and the governed, which has ever since existed, either actively or passively, in every country which has inherited the monarchical principle of imperial Rome; and the problem of combining efficient administration with constant responsibility, seems, in these states, still unsolved.

A series of changes in the Roman government had been commenced before the time of Constantine; yet the extent and durability of his reforms, and the distinctness of purpose with which they were conceived, must entitle him to rank as one of the greatest legislators of mankind. His defects

during his declining years, when his mind and body no longer possessed the activity necessary to inspect and control every detail of a despotic administration which centred in the sovereign's person, ought not to alter our judgment of his numerous wise laws and judicious reforms. Few legislators have effected greater revolutions than Constantine. He transferred the despotic power of the emperor, as commander-in-chief of the army, to the emperor, as political head of the government ; and reduced the military power to become subservient to the civil, in the whole range of the administration. He consolidated the dispensation of justice over the whole empire, by universal and systematic laws, which he deemed strong enough to form a bulwark for the people, against oppression on the part of the government. Feeble as this theoretic bulwark of law was found to be on great emergencies, it must be owned, that in the ordinary course of public affairs, it was not entirely ineffectual, and that it mainly contributed to prevent the decline of the Roman empire from proceeding with that rapidity, which has marked the decay of most other despotic monarchies. Constantine made a most judicious selection of a site for his new capital ; and he adopted a new religion, which, with unrivalled prudence, he rendered predominant under circumstances of great difficulty. His reforms have been supposed to have hastened the decline of the empire which they were intended to save ; but the contrary was really the case. He found the empire on the eve of being broken up into a number of smaller states, in consequence of the measures adopted by Diocletian to secure it against anarchy and civil

war. He reunited its provinces by a succession of brilliant military achievements; and by his subsequent arrangements, he endeavoured to avert the recurrence of a similar danger, as far as it was possible, in a society which neither admitted the principle of hereditary succession, nor of primogeniture, in the transmission of the imperial dignity.

The permanent success of Constantine's reforms, depended on his financial arrangements, supplying ample funds for all the demands of the administration. This fact indicates some similarity between the political condition of his government, and the present state of most European monarchies, and may render a close study of the errors of his financial arrangements not without profit to modern statesmen. The sums required for the annual service of the imperial government were immense; and in order to levy as great an amount of revenue from his subjects as possible, Constantine revised the census of all the taxes, and carried their amount as high as he possibly could. Every measure was adopted to transfer the whole circulating medium of the empire annually into the coffers of the state. No economy or industry could enable his subjects to accumulate wealth; while any accident, a fire, an earthquake, or a hostile incursion of the barbarians, might leave a whole province incapable of paying its taxes, and plunge it in hopeless ruin.

In general, the outward forms of the financial arrangements of the empire were very little altered by Constantine, but he rendered the whole fiscal system more regular, and more stringent; and during no reign was the maxim of the Roman

government, that the cultivators of the soil were nothing but the instruments for feeding and clothing the imperial court and the army, more steadily kept in view.\* All privileges were abolished; the tribute, or land-tax, was levied on the estates of all Roman subjects; and in the concessions made to the church, measures were usually adopted to preserve the rights of the fisc. A partial exemption of the property of the clergy was conceded by Constantine, in order to confer on the Christian priesthood a rank equal to that of the ancient patricians; but this was so contrary to the principles of his legislation, that it was withdrawn in the reign of Constantius. Some change appears to have been made in the revision of the register of the empire, on which the land-tax was calculated. This occurred every fifteenth year; and the cycle of indictions became, from this time, the ordinary system of chronological computation in use in the lower empire.† Constantine, it is true, passed many laws to protect his subjects from the oppression of the tax-gatherers; but the number and nature of these laws afford the strongest proof that the officers of the court, and the administration, were vested with powers too extensive to be used with moderation, and that all the vigilance of the emperor

\* JULIAN, *Orat.* ii. 92, ed. Span.

† The period is calculated from 1st September, 312. But IDELER, *Handbuch der Technische Chronologie*, ii. 350, proves its existence from the year of Rome, 705, B. C. 49. The amount of the land-tax for the year, was fixed annually, and reckoned from this time. The year is termed, from the tax, *indictio*. The years were reckoned until the fifteenth, and then they commenced again. Documents in which this manner of marking time is used, often contain no means of ascertaining the cycle, as they only mark the year of the indiction.

was required to prevent their destroying the source of the public revenues, by utterly ruining the tax-payers.\* Instead of reducing the numbers of the imperial household, and reforming the expenses of the court, in order to increase the fund available for the civil and military service of the state, Constantine added to the burden of an establishment which already included a large and useless population, by indulging in the most lavish ornament and sumptuous ceremonial. Nothing reveals more fully the state of barbarism and ignorance to which the Roman world had fallen; the sovereign sought to secure the admiration of his people by outward show; he held them incapable of judging of his conduct, which was guided by the emergencies of his position. The people, no longer connected with the government, and knowing only what passed in their own province, were terrified by the magnificence, power, and wealth, which the court displayed; and, hopeless of any change for the better, they regarded the emperor as an agent of heaven.

The reforms of Constantine required additional revenues. Two new taxes were imposed, which were regarded as the greatest grievances of his reign, and frequently selected as characteristic of his internal policy. These taxes were termed the senatorial tax, and the chrysargyron. The first alienated the aristocracy, and the second excited the complaints of every class of society, for it was a tax on profits, levied in the severest manner on every species of receipts.† All the existing constitutions,

\* AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS, xxv. 4.

† ZOSIMUS, ii. 38.

ordinary and extraordinary, and all the monopolies and restrictions affecting the sale of grain, were retained. The exactions of prior governments were stretched to the utmost.\* All the presents and gifts which had usually been made to former superiors, were levied by Constantine as a matter of right, and regarded as ordinary sources of revenue.

The municipal government of the towns and cities began now to be regarded as a burden rather than a privilege. The magistracy of the Roman municipalities had formed an aristocratic or oligarchic body, in accordance with the whole fabric of the constitution. These magistrates had willingly borne all the burdens imposed on them by the state, as long as they could throw the ultimate load on the people over whom they presided. The people were now too poor to render the municipal charges profitable, and the government was compelled to force the wealthy citizens to accept posts in the local magistracy. As the community was responsible for the whole amount of the taxes, the rich were obliged to make good the deficiency of the poor, and all the members of the society were gradually brought down to the same level. It required several centuries to effect the general ruin; but Constantine was strong enough to impose arrangements on the empire, by which the government was enabled to ruin the people, before a reduction would be felt in the amount of the public revenues.

In Greece, all the local governments existed;

\* AMM. MARCELL. xvii. 3. *Cod. Theodos.* xi. t. 28.

every municipal burden, indeed, was carefully and rigorously enforced by the imperial government, whenever it tended to relieve the imperial treasury from any expense; but, at the same time, all those privileges which had once alleviated the pressure of the revenue law, in particular districts, were now abolished. The principle adopted by the Roman government, in all its relations with the people, or with the municipalities, was to assume, in every contested case, that the citizens were endeavouring to evade a burden which they were capable of bearing. This feeling at last sowed the seeds of a deep hatred of the imperial administration in all the subjects of the empire, as they saw that they were excluded from every hope of justice in fiscal questions.\*

The military organization of the Roman armies was greatly changed by Constantine; and the change is peculiarly remarkable, as the barbarians were adopting the very principles of tactics, which the emperors found it necessary to abandon. The system of the Roman armies, in ancient times, was devised to make them efficient on the field of battle. As the Romans were always invaders, they knew well that they could at last force their enemies to decide their differences in a pitched battle. The frontiers of the empire required a very different method for their defence. The chief duty of the army was to occupy an extended line against an active enemy, far inferior in the field. The necessity of effecting rapid movements of the troops, in bodies varying continually in number, became a primary object in

\* *Cod. Theodos.* xi. t. 36. l. 6. &c.



the new tactics. Constantine remodelled the legions, by reducing the number of men to fifteen hundred; and he separated the cavalry entirely from the infantry, and placed them under a different command. He increased the number of the light troops, instituted new divisions in the forces, and made considerable modifications in the armour and weapons of the Romans. The change in the form of the army was also rendered necessary, by the difficulty which the government experienced, in raising a sufficient number of men of the class and strength necessary to fill the ranks of the legions, according to the old system. It became necessary to choose between diminishing the number of the troops on the frontier, or admit an inferior class of soldiers into the army.\* Motives of economy, and the fear of the seditious spirit of the legions, also dictated several changes in the constitution of the forces. From this time, the northern nations began to prepare themselves for meeting the Romans in the field of battle.

The opposition which always existed between the Roman government and the provincials, rendered any intimate connection, or community of feeling, between the soldiers and the people, a thing to be cautiously guarded against by the state. The interests of the army required to be kept carefully separated from those of the citizens; and when Constantine, from motives of economy, withdrew the troops from the camps and forts on the frontiers, and placed them in garrison in the towns, their discipline was relaxed, and their license overlooked,

\* *Cod. Theodos.* vii. t. 18. l. 4.

in order to prevent them from acquiring the feelings of citizens.\* As the barbarians were beyond the influence of any provincial or political sympathies, and were sure to be regarded as enemies by every class in the empire, they became the chosen troops of the emperors.† These favourites soon discovered their own importance, and behaved with as great insolence as the pretorian bands had ever displayed.‡

The necessity of preventing the possibility of a falling off in the revenue, was, in the eyes of the imperial court, of as much consequence as the maintenance of the efficiency of the army. Proprietors of land, and citizens of wealth, were not allowed to enrol themselves as soldiers, lest they should escape from paying their taxes; and only those plebeians and peasants, who were not liable to the land-tax, were received as warriors.§ It was the duty of the poor to serve in person, and of the rich to supply the revenues of the state. The effect of this was, that the Roman forces were often recruited with slaves, in spite of the laws frequently passed to prohibit this abuse; and, not long after the time of Constantine, slaves were often admitted to enter the army on receiving their freedom.|| The subjects of the emperors had, therefore, little to attach them to their government, supported by troops composed of barbarians and slaves.

\* ZOSIMUS, ii. 34. † AMM. MARCELL. xix. 11. ‡ Ib. xiv. 10; xv. 5.

§ NAUDER corrects Gibbon's opinion, (iii. 65,) that "every proprietor was obliged either to take up arms, or to procure a substitute, or purchase his exemption by the payment of a heavy fine."—*Sur les changemens dans l'administration de l'Empire Romain*, ii. 175.

|| *Cod. Theod.* vii. t. 18. l. 4. *Cod. Just.* vii. t. 13. l. 4. *Novell.* 81.

SECTION II.—THE CONDITION OF THE GREEKS WAS NOT  
IMPROVED BY CONSTANTINE'S REFORMS.

THE general system of Constantine's government was by no means favourable to the advancement of the Greeks as a national body. His new division of the empire into four prefectories was so combined, as to neutralize, by administrative arrangements, any influence that the Greeks might acquire, from the union which their language and manners naturally produced in a large portion of the population. The four prefectures of the empire were, the Orient, Illyria, Italy, and Gaul, and a pretorian prefect directed the civil administration of each of these great divisions of the empire. The prefectures were divided into governments, and these governments were again subdivided into provinces. The prefecture of the Orient embraced five governments; the first was called by the name of the prefecture, the Orient; the others were Egypt, Asia, Pontus, and Thrace. In all these, the Greeks formed only a section of the population, and their influence was controlled by the adverse prejudices and interests of the natives. The prefecture of Illyria consisted of two governments,—Macedonia and Dacia. Macedonia included six provinces,—Achæa, Macedonia, Crete, Thessaly, Old Epirus, and New Epirus; and in all these the population was almost entirely Greek. In Dacia, or the provinces between the Danube and Mount Hæmus, the Adriatic, and the Black Sea, the civilized portion of the inhabitants was more imbued

with the language and prejudices of Rome than of Greece.\*

The Greek population of the East had been losing ground since the reign of Hadrian. Pescennius Niger had shewn, that the national feelings of the East might be roused against the oppression of Rome, without adopting Hellenic prejudices. The establishment of the kingdom of Palmyra by Odenathus, and the conquest of Syria and Egypt, gave a severe blow to the influence of the Greeks in these countries. Zenobia, it is true, cultivated Greek literature, but she spoke Syriac and Coptic with equal fluency. Her armies were composed of Syrians and Saracens; and in the civil administration, the natives of each province would be raised to an equal rank with the Greeks. The cause of the Greek population, especially in Syria and Egypt, became more closely connected with the declining power of Rome; and as early as the reign of Aurelian, immediately after he had conquered Zenobia, an attempt was made, by a portion of the native population in Egypt, to throw off the Roman and Greek yoke. The rebellion of Firmus is almost neglected in the history of the numerous rival emperors who were subdued by Aurelian; but the very fact that he was styled by his conqueror a robber, and not a rival, shews that his cause made him a more serious and deadly enemy.†

These signs of nationality could not be overlooked, and the political organization of the empire was rendered more efficient than it had formerly

\* *Notitia dignitatum Imperii Romani.*

† VOPISCUS. PROBUS.

been, to crush the smallest manifestations of national feeling among any body of its subjects. On the other hand, nothing was done by Constantine with the direct view of improving the condition of the Greeks. Two of his laws have been much praised for their humanity; but they really afford the strongest proofs of the miserable condition, to which the inhumanity of the government had reduced the people; and though these laws, doubtless, granted some relief to Greece, they originated in views of general policy. By the one, the collectors of the revenue were prohibited, under pain of death, to seize the slaves, cattle, and instruments of agriculture, of the farmer, for the payment of his taxes; and, by the other, all forced labour, at public works, was ordered to be suspended during seed-time and harvest.\* The agriculture and commerce of Greece had derived some advantage, from the tranquillity which the country had enjoyed during the wide spread civil wars, which preceded the reigns of Diocletian and Constantine. As far as the imperial government was concerned, commerce was burdened by the old spirit of neglect and monopoly. The officers of the palace, and even the Christian clergy, were allowed to carry merchandize from one province to another, free from the duties which fall heavily on the regular trader.† It was not, indeed, until the reign of Valentinian the Third, that the clergy were finally prohibited from engaging in commerce.‡ The emperor was, himself, both a merchant and manufacturer; and his commercial

\* *Cod. Theodos.* 11. 30. 1. *Cod. Just.* viii. 17. 7 ; xi. 47. 1.

† *Cod. Theodos.* xvi. 2. 7. ‡ A.D. 452. *Norell.* lib. ii. 12.

operations contributed materially to impoverish his subjects, and to destroy all the internal trade of his dominions. The imperial household formed a numerous population, separated from the other subjects of the empire; and the imperial officers purchased whatever was required for this immense establishment, even in the most distant markets. The public posts furnished the means of transporting this merchandize free of expense, and the officers charged with its conveyance would avail themselves of this opportunity to enrich themselves, by importing whatever they could sell with profit. Imperial manufactories supplied those goods which could be produced in the empire; and there can be little doubt, that private manufacturers would seldom venture to furnish the same articles, lest their trade should interfere with the secret sources of profit of some powerful officer. These facts sufficiently explain the rapid decline in the general wealth of the population of the Roman empire, which followed the transference of the capital to Constantinople. Yet, while commerce was thus ruined, the humble and honest occupation of the shopkeeper was treated as a dishonourable profession, and his condition was rendered doubly contemptible, by restrictions which compelled him to remain in poverty. He was not allowed to travel with more than one thousand *folles*, under pain of exile.\* This singular law must have been adopted, partly to secure the monopolies of the importing

\* 24 folles = 1 millaresion of sixty to the pound of silver. DUREAU DE LA MALLE, *Economie Politique des Romains*, i. 118. NAUDET, ii. 119.

merchants, and partly as a preventive of robbery in the disorganized state of the provinces.

Though the change of the capital from Rome to Constantinople produced many modifications in the government, its influence on the Greek population was much less than one might have expected. The new city was an exact copy of old Rome. Its institutions, manners, interests, and language, were Roman; and it inherited all the isolation of the old capital, and stood in direct opposition to the Greeks, and all the provincials. It was inhabited by senators from Rome. Wealthy individuals from the provinces were, likewise, compelled to keep up houses at Constantinople, pensions were conferred upon them, and a right to distributions of provisions, to a considerable amount, was annexed to these dwellings. These rations consisted of bread, oil, wine, and meat, and formed an important branch of revenue, even to the better class of the citizens. These distributions were entirely different from the public ones at Rome, which were established, as a gratification, by the state, to the poor citizens who had no other means of livelihood.\* The tribute of grain from Egypt was appropriated to supply Constantinople, and that of Africa was

\* There is some difficulty in fixing the exact amount of the distribution even of grain at Constantinople. Gibbon says 80,000 rations daily; but Constantine annually destined 85,000 measures, doubtless, *medimni*. Six modii made a medimnus, and five modii were the monthly allowance at Rome. This would only give 8,500 rations of this low class. Theodosius added 125 modii a-day, or 750 rations to the above. This seems too little for the aristocratic nature of the Constantinopolitan privilege. Compare GIBBON, vol. iii. 27. c. xvii. note, and NAUDET, *Des secours publics chez les Romains*, p. 48, in the *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions*, T. xiii. and the authorities they refer to.

left for the consumption of Rome. We here discover the tie which bound the new capital to the cause of the emperors, and an explanation of the toleration shewn by these to the factions of the circus, and the disorders of the populace. The emperor, and the inhabitants of the capital, felt, that they had a common interest in supporting the despotic power by which the provinces were drained of money, to support the luxurious expenditure of the court, and to supply provisions and amusements for the people; and, consequently, the tumults of the populace never induced the emperors to weaken the influence of the capital; nor did the tyranny of the emperors ever induce the citizens of the capital to demand the systematic circumscription of the imperial authority.

Even the change of religion produced very little improvement in the imperial government. The old evils of Roman tyranny were perpetrated under a more regular and legal despotism, and a purer religion, but they were not less generally oppressive. The government grew daily weaker as the people grew poorer; the population rapidly diminished, and the frame-work of society became gradually disorganized. The regularity of the details of the administration rendered it more burdensome; the obedience enforced in the army had only been obtained by the deterioration of its discipline. The barrier which the empire opposed to the ravages of the barbarians, became, consequently, weaker under each succeeding emperor.



SECTION III. — CHANGES PRODUCED IN THE SOCIAL  
CONDITION OF THE GREEKS BY THE ALLIANCE OF  
CHRISTIANITY WITH THEIR NATIONAL MANNERS.

THE decline of the national influence of the Romans, and of the supremacy of the Roman government, had brought about some favourable conjunctures for the Greeks to improve their condition. Christianity connected itself with the social organization of the people, without meddling with their political condition; but, in so doing, it every where awakened the national feelings of mankind, and soon produced some improvement in the political, as well as in the moral and religious, position of the Greeks. Though Christianity failed to save the Roman empire from decline, it reinvigorated the popular mind, and reorganized the people, by giving them a powerful and permanent object on which to concentrate their attention. As it long communicated only with the middling classes of society, it was compelled, in every different province of the empire, to assume the language and usages of the locality, and thus it was enabled to combine individual attachment with universal power. It must be observed, that a great change took place from the period that Constantine formed a political alliance with the church as a corporate body. The great benefits which the inhabitants of the Roman empire had derived from the organization of the Christian teachers and ministers, as being in connection with national feelings, was then neutralized. The church became a political institution of the Roman

empire; the Christian religion alone remained a national doctrine.

Paganism had undergone a great change about the time of the establishment of the Roman empire. A belief in the resurrection of the body had begun to spread, both among the Romans and the Greeks; and it is to the prevalence of this belief, that the great success of the worship of Serapis, and the adoption of the practice of burying the dead in a sarcophagus of marble, instead of burning it on a funeral pile, are to be attributed.\* The decline of paganism had proceeded far, before Christianity was adopted by the Greeks. The ignorance of the people, on the one hand, and the speculations of the philosophers on the other, tended to destroy paganism; for it rested more on mythological and historical recollections, and on associations derived from, and connected with, art, than on any moral principle or mental conviction. The paganism of the Greeks was a worship identified with particular tribes of citizens, and with precise localities; and the want of this local and material union had been constantly felt by the Greeks of Asia and Alexandria, and had tended much to introduce those modifications in the national faith, by which the Alexandrine philosophers attempted to unite it with their metaphysical views. But a religion which could deify Caligula, Nero, Domitian, and Commodus, must have fallen into contempt with the people; and even those who believed in its claims

\* Serapis was the god of futurity, and the judge of the dead. Visconti has shewn that the practice of burial had commenced in the time of Augustus. *Museo, Pio Clem.* T. v. 10.

to divine authority, must have regarded it with hatred, as having formed an unjust alliance with their tyrants. It is not, therefore, surprising, that a disbelief in the gods of the empire was general, among the people throughout the East. But it is impossible for man to exist in society without some religious feeling. The worship of the gods was therefore immediately replaced by a number of superstitious practices, borrowed from foreign nations, or by the revival of the traditions of a ruder period, relating to an inferior class of spirits.

The wealth of the temples in Greece, and the large funds appropriated to public feasts and religious ceremonies, long ensured an appearance of devotion ; but a considerable portion of these funds began to be enjoyed as the private fortunes of the hereditary priests, or were diverted, by the corporations charged with their administration, from their intended use, for other purposes than the service of the temples, without these changes exciting any complaints. The progressive decline of the ancient religion is marked by the numerous laws which the emperors were compelled to pass against secret divination, and the rites of magicians, diviners, and astrologers. These modes of prying into futurity had always been regarded by the Romans and the Greeks as impious, and hostile to the religion of the state.\* The contempt of the Greeks, especially, for the ancient religion, was shewn by their general indifference to the rites of sacrifice, and to the

\* BONAMY, *Du rapport de la magie avec la théologie Païenne. Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions*, vii. 25. SUTTONIUS, *Tiber*, c. 63. *Cod. Theodos.* ix. 16.

ceremonials of their festivals. While the great struggle with Christianity was openly carried on, this was peculiarly remarkable. The emperor Julian often complains, in his works, of this indifference, and gives rather a ludicrous instance of its extent in an anecdote which happened to himself. As emperor and pontifex maximus, he repaired to the temple of Apollo at Daphne, near Antioch, on the day of the great feast. He declares, that he expected to see the temple filled with sacrifices, but he found not even a cake, nor a grain of incense; and the god would have been without an offering, had the priest himself not brought a goose, the only victim which Apollo received on the day of his festival. Julian proves by this anecdote, that all the population of Antioch was Christian, otherwise curiosity would have induced a few to visit the temple.\*

The laws of the moral world prevent any great reformation in society from being effected, without the production of some positive evil. Many of the best feelings of humanity are often awakened in support of very questionable institutions; and all opinions hallowed by the lapse of time, become so endeared by old recollections, that the most self-evident truths are frequently overlooked, and the greatest benefits to the mass of mankind are peremptorily rejected, when their first announcement attacks an existing prejudice. No principles of political wisdom, and no regulations of human

\* Even at Athens paganism had ceased to be publicly practised before Julian ascended the throne. LIBANIUS, in *Julian. necem*, p. 288. ed Morell. The contending influence of Christianity and paganism on the municipal authorities of the Greek cities, might perhaps be illustrated by careful study.

prudence, could, therefore, have averted the many evils which attended the change of the religion of the Roman empire, even though the change was from fable to truth, from paganism to Christianity.

The steady progress which Christianity made against paganism, and the deep impression it produced on the middling classes of society, and on the votaries of philosophy, are certainly wonderful, when the weight of prejudice, the wealth of the temples, the pride of the schoolmen, and the influence of college endowments, are taken into consideration. Throughout the East, the educated Greeks, from a peculiar disposition of mind, were easily led to grant an attentive hearing to the promulgators of new doctrines and systems. Even at Athens, Paul was listened to with great respect by many of the philosophers; and after his public oration to the Athenians at the Areopagus, some said, "We will hear thee again of this matter." A belief, that the principle of unity, both in politics and religion, must, from its simplicity and truth, lead to perfection, was an error of the human mind extremely prevalent at the time that Christianity was first preached. That one according spirit might be traced in the universe, and that there was one God, the Father of all, was a very prevalent doctrine.\* This tendency towards despotism in politics, and deism in religion, is a feature of the human

\* MAXIMUS TYRIUS, *Diss.* xvii. *Quarterly Review*, July, 1840. *Alexandria and the Alexandrines*. The analogy which it was supposed ought to exist between the government of earth and heaven, induced the army, at a later period, to demand that the imperial power should be vested in three emperors, in order that the trinity might be represented. CONSTANTINE (*Pogonatus*) iv.

mind which continually reappears in certain conditions of society, and corruptions of civilization. At the same time, a very general dissatisfaction was felt at these conclusions; and the desire of establishing the principle of man's responsibility, and his connection with another state of existence, seemed hardly compatible with the unity of the divine essence adored by the philosophers.

Under these circumstances, Christianity could not fail of making numerous converts. It boldly announced the full bearing of truths, of which the Greek philosophers had only afforded a dim glimpse; and it distinctly contradicted many of the favourite dreams of the national, but falling, faith of Greece. It required either to be rejected or adopted. Among the Greeks, therefore, Christianity met every where with a curious and attentive audience. The feelings of the public mind were dormant; Christianity opened the sources of eloquence, and revived the influence of popular opinion. From the moment a people, in the state of intellectual civilization in which the Greeks were, could listen to the preachers, it was certain they would adopt the religion. They might alter, modify, or corrupt it, but it was impossible that they should reject it. The existence of an assembly, in which the dearest interests of all human beings were expounded and discussed in the language of truth, and with the most earnest expressions of persuasion, must have lent an irresistible charm to the investigation of the new doctrine, among a people possessing the institutions and feelings of the Greeks. Sincerity, truth, and a desire to persuade others, will soon create eloquence

where numbers are gathered together. Christianity revived oratory, and with oratory it awakened many of the national characteristics which had slept for ages. The discussions of Christianity gave also new vigour to the communal and municipal institutions, as it improved the intellectual qualities of the people.

The demoralization of society prevalent throughout the world has been noticed, and its injurious effect on the position of the Greek females, must have long been seriously felt by every Grecian mother. The educated females in Greece, therefore, naturally welcomed the pure morality of the Gospel without hesitation, and, to their exertions, the rapid conversion of the middling orders must in some degree be attributed. Female influence must not be overlooked, if we would form a just estimate of the change produced in society, by the conversion of the Greeks to Christianity.

The effect of Christianity soon extended to political society, and the secret of this is to be sought in the manner in which it enforced the observance of the moral duties, on every rank of men without distinction, and the way in which it called in the aid of public opinion, to enforce that self-respect, which a sense of responsibility is sure to nourish. This political influence of Christianity soon displayed itself among the Greeks. They had always been deeply imbued with a feeling of equality, and their condition, after their conquest by the Romans, had impressed on them the necessity of a moral code, to which superiors and inferiors, rulers and subjects, were both equally amenable. The very circumstances, however, which gave Christi-

anity peculiar attractions for the Greeks, excited a feeling of suspicion among the Roman official authorities. Considering, indeed, the manner in which the Christians formed themselves into separate congregations, in all the cities and towns of the East, the constituted form which they gave to their own society, entirely independent of the civil authority in the state, the high moral character, and the popular talents, of many of their leaders, it is not wonderful, that the Roman emperors should have conceived some alarm at the increase of the new sect, and deemed it necessary to exterminate it by persecution. Until the government of the empire was prepared to adopt the tenets of Christianity, and identify itself with the Christian population, it was not unnatural that the Christians should be regarded as a separate, and consequently, inimical class; for it must be confessed, that the bonds of their political society were too powerful, to allow any government to remain at ease. Let us, for a moment, form a picture of the events which must have been of daily occurrence in the cities of Greece. A Christian merchant arriving at Argos or Sparta, would soon excite attention in the *agora* and the *lesche*. His opinions would be examined and controverted. Eloquence and knowledge were by no means rare gifts among the traders of Greece, from the time of Solon, the oil merchant. The discussions which had been commenced in the markets, would penetrate into the municipal councils. The smaller states would be roused to an unwonted energy, and the Roman governors astonished and alarmed.

It was, undoubtedly, the power of the Christians,

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as a political body, which excited several of the persecutions against them; and the accusation to which they were subjected, of being the enemies of the human race, was caused by their enforcing general principles of humanity, at variance with the despotic maxims of the Roman government. When the cry of popular hatred was once excited, accusations of promiscuous profligacy, and of devouring human sacrifices, were the calumnious additions, in accordance with the credulity of the age.\* The first act of legal toleration which the Christians met with from the Roman government, was conceded to their power as a political party, by Maxentius.† They were persecuted and tolerated by Maximin, according to what he conceived to be the dictates of his interest for the time. Constantine, who had long acted as the leader of their political party, at last seated Christianity on the throne, and, by his prudence, the world for many years enjoyed the happiness of religious toleration.‡

From the moment Christianity was adopted by the Hellenic race, it was so identified with the habits of the people, as to become essentially incorporated with the subsequent history of the nation. The earliest corporations of Greek Christians were united in distinct bodies, by civil as well as by religious ties. The members of each congregation assembled not only for divine worship, but also when any subject of general interest required their

\* *Epulæ Thyestæ, promiscuus concubitus, odium generis humani.*

† EUSEBIUS, *Hist. Eccles.* viii. c. 14 ; ix. c. 9.

‡ TZSCHIRNER, *Der Fall des Heidenthums*, Leip. 1829. BEUGNOT, *Histoire de la Destruction du Paganisme en Occident*, 2 vols. Paris, 1835.

opinion or decision : and the everyday business of the community was intrusted to their spiritual teachers, and to the most influential individuals in the society, formally or tacitly elected by their brethren. It is impossible to determine, exactly, the limits of the authority of the clergy and the elders, in the various Christian communities, during the first century. As there was usually a perfect concord on every subject, precise regulations, either to settle the bounds of clerical authority, or the form of administering the business of the society, could not be considered necessary. It cannot, indeed, be supposed, that one uniform course of proceeding was adopted, for the internal government of all the Christian communities throughout the world. Such a thing would have been too much at variance with the habits of the Greeks, and the nature of the Roman empire. Circumstances must have rendered the government of the Christian churches, in some parts of the East, strictly monarchical ; while, in the municipalities of Greece, it would certainly appear more for the spiritual interests of religion, that even the doctrines of the society should be discussed according to the forms used in transacting the public business of these little autonomous states. Such differences would excite no attention among the cotemporary members of the respective churches, for both would be regarded as equally conformable to the spirit of Christianity. Precise laws and regulations, usually originate in the necessity of preventing definite evils, so that principles of action operate as guides to conduct, and exert a practical influence on the lives

of thousands, for years before they become embodied in public enactments.

The most distant communities of Christian Greeks in the East were connected by the closest bonds of union, not only for spiritual purposes, but also on account of the mutual protection and assistance which they were called upon to afford one another, in the days of persecution. The progress of Christianity among the Greeks was so rapid, that they soon surpassed in numbers, wealth, and influence, any other body separated, by peculiar usages, from the mass of the population of the Roman empire. The Greek language became the ordinary medium of communication on ecclesiastical affairs in the East; and the Christian communities of Greeks were gradually melted into one nation, having a common civil administration in some things, as well as a common religion. Their ecclesiastical government thus acquired a moral force, which rendered it superior to the local authorities, and which at last rivalled the influence of the political administration of the empire. The Greek church had grown up to be almost equal in power to the Roman state, before Constantine determined to unite the two in strict alliance.

This power had received a regular organization as early as the second century. Deputies, from the different congregations in Greece, met together at stated intervals and places, and formed provincial synods, which replaced the Achæan, Phocic, Bœotic, and Amphyctionic assemblies of former days.\* How

\* TERTULLIAN, *De jejun.* p. 650, Paris, 1580. EUSEBIUS, *Hist. Eccles.* v. 16.

these assemblies were composed, what part the people took in the election of the clerical deputies, and what rights the laity possessed in the provincial councils, are points which have been much disputed, and do not yet seem to be very accurately determined. The people, the lay elders, and the clergy or spiritual teachers, were the component parts of each separate community, in the earliest periods.\* The numbers of the Christians soon required that several congregations should be formed in a single city; these congregations sought to maintain a constant communication, in order to secure perfect unanimity. Deputies were appointed to meet for this purpose; and the most distinguished and ablest members of the clergy naturally became the presidents of these assemblies. These were the bishops, who soon became charged with the conduct of all public business during the intervals between the meetings of the deputies. The superior education and character of the bishops placed the greater part of the civil business of the community in their hands; the ecclesiastical then appeared their peculiar province by right; and, as they possessed the fullest confidence of their flocks, and as no fear was then entertained that the power intrusted to these disinterested and pious men could ever be abused, their authority was never called in question.

The political organization and influence of the Christian communities could not fail to arrest the attention of the Roman authorities, from the time the provincial synods replaced, in the popular mind,

\* *Acts of the Apostles*, vi. 2; xv.

the older national institutions; and, in a short time, the power of the patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria excited the jealousy of the emperors themselves. The monarchical ideas of the eastern Greeks vested extensive authority in the hands of their bishops and patriarchs; and their power excited more alarm in the Roman government, than the municipal forms of conducting ecclesiastical business, which were adopted by the natives of Greece, in accordance with the civil constitutions of the Greek cities and states. This fact became evident from an examination of the list of the martyrs who perished in the persecutions of the third century, when political alarm, rather than religious zeal, moved the government to acts of cruelty. While numbers were murdered in Antioch, Alexandria, Cæsarea, Smyrna, and Thessalonica, but very few were sacrificed at Corinth, Athens, Patras, and Nicopolis.\*

Christianity long formed a confederation of communities in the heart of the eastern portion of the Roman empire, openly regarding with hatred some of the political maxims of the state. The power of Christianity exercised some influence, in determining Constantine to transfer his capital into that part of his dominions, where so numerous and powerful a body of his subjects were attached to his person and his cause. Both Constantine and the Christians had their own grounds of hostility to Rome and the Romans. The senate and the Roman nobility remained firmly attached to paganism, which was, indeed, converted into the bond of union of the con-

\* *Menologium Græcorum jussu Basilii Imp. editum*, Urbini, 1727. FALLMERAYER, i. 110. ZINKREIBEN, 604.

servative party, in the western portion of the empire, and thus the Greeks were enabled to secure a predominancy in the Christian church. The imperial prejudices of Constantine appear to have concealed from him this fact; and he seems never to have perceived, that the cause of the Christian church and the Greek nation were already closely interwoven, unless his inclination to Arianism, in his latter days, is to be attributed to a wish to suppress the national spirit, which began to display itself in the Eastern church. The policy of circumscribing the power of orthodoxy, as too closely connected with national feelings, was more openly followed by Constantius.

The numbers of the Christians in the Roman empire, at the time of the first general council of the Christian church at Nice, is a subject of great importance towards affording a just estimation of many historical facts. If the conjecture be correct, that the Christians, at the time of Constantine's conversion, hardly amounted to a twelfth, and perhaps did not exceed a twentieth part of the population of the empire, this would certainly afford the strongest proof of the admirable civil organization by which they were united.\* But this can hardly be considered possible, when applied to the eastern provinces of the empire, and is certainly incorrect, with regard to the Greek cities. It seems established by the rescript of Maximin, and by the testimony of the martyr Lucianus,—supported as these are by a mass of collateral evidence,—that the Christians formed, throughout the East, the majority of the middling classes of Greek

\* LABASTIE, 4me. *Mémoire sur le Souverain Pontificat des Empereurs Romains. Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscrip.* xv. 77.

society.\* Still history affords few facts which supply a fair criterion, to estimate the numbers, or strength, of either the Christian or pagan population generally, throughout the empire. The imperial authority, supported by the army, which was equally destitute of religion and nationality, was powerful enough to oppress or persecute either party, according to the personal disposition of the emperor. There were Christians who endeavoured to excite Constantius to persecute the pagans, and to seize the wealth which their temples contained,† Constantine had found himself strong enough to carry off the gold and silver statues and ornaments from many temples; but, as this was done with the sanction and assistance of the Christian population where it occurred, it seems probable, that it only happened in those places where the whole community, or at least the corporation possessing the legal control over the temporal concerns of these, had embraced Christianity.‡ In any other case, the fact would be too strongly at variance with the systematic toleration of Constantine's reign.

The pagan Julian was strongly incited to persecute the Christians by the more fanatical of the pagans; nor did he himself ever appear to doubt, that his power was sufficient to have commenced a persecution; and, consequently, he takes credit to himself, in his writings, for the principles of toleration which he adopted.§ The attempt of Julian to

\* Milman, however, doubts the fact of the Christians forming a majority of the population in the East.—*History of Christianity*, vol. ii. p. 21, Paris ed.

† BEUGNOT, i. 149.

‡ EUSEBIUS, *Laud. Const.* c. 8.

§ JULIANI, *Epist.* 41, p. 98. BEUGNOT gives a clear and fair view of the tolerant policy of Julian's reign.—*Histoire de la Destruction du Paganisme en Occident.*

re-establish paganism was, however, a very unstatesmanlike proceeding, and exhibited the strongest proof of the rapidly approaching dissolution of the old religion. Julian was an enthusiast; and he was so far carried away by his ardour, as to desire the restoration of ceremonies and usages long consigned to oblivion, and ridiculous in the eyes of his pagan contemporaries. In the East, he accelerated the ruin of the cause which he espoused. His own acquaintance with paganism had been gained chiefly from books, and from the lessons of philosophers; for he had long been compelled to conform to Christianity, and to acquire his knowledge of paganism only by stealth. When he acted the Pontifex Maximus, according to the written instructions of the old ceremonial, he was looked upon as the pedantic reviver of an antiquated ceremony. The religion, too, which he had studied, was that of the ancient Greeks,—a system of belief which had irrevocably passed away. With the conservative pagan party of Rome, he never formed any alliance. The fancy of Julian to restore Hellenism, and to call himself a Greek, was, therefore, regarded by all parties in the empire as an imperial folly. Nothing but princely ignorance of the state of opinion, in his age, could have induced Julian to endeavour to awaken the national feelings of the Greeks in favour of paganism, in order to oppose them to Christianity, for their nationality was now engaged in the Christian cause. This mistaken notion of the emperor was seen by the Romans, and made a strong impression on the historians of Julian's reign. They have all condemned his superstition; for such, in their eyes,



his fanatic imitation of antiquated Hellenic usages appeared to be.\*

SECTION IV. — THE ORTHODOX CHURCH BECAME IDENTIFIED WITH THE GREEK NATION.

WHEN Constantine embraced Christianity, he allowed paganism to remain the established religion of the state, and left the pagans in the possession of all their privileges. The principle of toleration was received as a political maxim of the Roman government, and it continued, with little interruption, to be so, until the reign of Theodosius the Great, who undertook to abolish paganism by legislative enactments. The Christian emperors continued, until the reign of Gratian, to bear the title of Pontifex Maximus, and to act as the political head of the pagan religion. This political supremacy of the emperor over the pagan priesthood, was applied also to the Christian church; and in the reign of Constantine, the imperial power over the external and civil affairs of the church was fully admitted by the whole Christian clergy. The respect which Constantine shewed to the ministers of Christianity, never induced him to overlook this supremacy. Even in the general council of Nice, the assembled clergy would not proceed to transact any business until the emperor had taken his seat, and authorized them to proceed. All Constantine's grants to the church were regarded as marks of imperial favour;

\* AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS, XXV. 4. AURELIUS VICTOR. *Epit.* EUTROPIUS.

and he considered himself entitled to resume them, and transfer them to the Arians. During the Arian reigns of Constantius and Valens, the power of the state over the church was still more manifest.\*

From the death of Constantine, until the accession of Theodosius the Great, a period of thirty years elapsed, during which Christianity, though the religion of the emperors, and of a numerous body of their subjects, was not the established religion of the state. In the western provinces, paganism was still predominant; and even in those which had embraced Christianity, the Christian party was weakened by being divided into rival sects. The Arians and orthodox regarded one another with almost as much hostility as they did the pagans. During this period, the orthodox clergy were placed in a state of probation, which powerfully contributed towards connecting their interests and feelings with those of the Greek population. Constantine had determined to organize the Christian church, within the bounds of the Roman empire, precisely in the same manner as the civil government. The object of this arrangement, was to render the church completely subservient to the imperial administration, and to break, as much as possible, its connection with the people. For this purpose, the higher ecclesiastical charges were rendered independent of public opinion. The wealth and temporal power, which the clergy suddenly attained by the favour of Constantine,

\* EUSEBIUS, *De vita Constant. Mag.* iv. 24.

soon produced the usual effects of sudden riches and irresponsible authority, in corrupting the minds of men. The disputes relating to the Arian heresy were imbittered by the eagerness of the clergy to possess the richest episcopal sees; and their conflicts became so scandalous, that they were rendered a subject of popular satire in places of public amusement.\* The favour shewn by the Arian emperors to their own party, proved ultimately beneficial to the orthodox clergy. The Roman empire was still nominally pagan, the Roman emperors were avowedly Arian, and the Greeks felt little disposed to sympathize with the traditional superstitions of their conquerors, or the personal opinions of their masters. During this period, therefore, they listened with redoubled attention to the doctrines of the orthodox clergy, and from this time the Greek nation, and the orthodox church, became closely identified.

The orthodox teachers of the Gospel, driven from the ecclesiastical preferments which depended on court favour, and deserted by the ambitious and worldly-minded clergy, cultivated those virtues, and pursued that line of conduct, which had endeared the earlier preachers of Christianity to their flocks. The old popular organization of the church was preserved, and more completely amalgamated with the municipal and communal constitution of the Greek nation. The people took part in the election of their spiritual pastors, and influenced the choice of their bishops. The national, as well as the

\* EUSEBIUS, *De vita Constant. Mag.* l. ii. 61.

religious, sentiments of the Greeks, were called into action, and provincial synods were held for the purpose of defending the orthodox priesthood against the imperial and Arian administration. The majority of the orthodox congregations were Greek, and Greek was the language of the orthodox clergy. Latin was the language of the court and of the heretics. Many circumstances, therefore, combined to consolidate the connection formed, at this time, between the orthodox church, and the Greek population, throughout the eastern provinces of the empire; while some of these circumstances tended more particularly to connect the clergy with the educated Greeks, and to give to the orthodox church the character of a national institution.

In ancient Hellas and the Peloponnesus, paganism was still far from being extinct, or, at least, as was not unfrequently the case, the people, without caring much about the ancient religion, persisted in celebrating, with some enthusiasm, the rites and festivals consecrated by antiquity.\* Valentinian and Valens renewed the laws which had been often passed against various pagan rites; and both of these emperors encouraged the persecution of those who were accused of this imaginary crime. It must be observed, however, that these accusations were generally directed against wealthy individuals; and, on the whole, they appear to have been dictated by the old imperial maxim of filling the treasury by confiscations, rather than risking the imposition of new taxes.† In Greece, the ordinary

\* BEUGNOT, vol. ii. p. 162, note b.

† AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS, xxx. 1. 9. ZOSIMUS, iv. 13.

ceremonies of paganism often bore a close resemblance to the prohibited rites; and the new laws could not have been enforced without causing a general persecution of paganism, which does not appear to have been the object of the emperors. The proconsul of Greece, himself a pagan, solicited the emperor Valens to exempt his province from the operation of the law; and so tolerant was the Roman administration, when the district was too poor to offer a rich harvest for the fisc, that Greece was allowed to continue to celebrate its pagan festivals.\*

Until this period, the temples had generally preserved all their property and revenues administered by private individuals, and drawn from sources unconnected with the public treasury. The rapid destruction of the temples, which took place after the reign of Valens, must have been caused, in a great measure, by the conversion of those intrusted with their care, to Christianity. When the hereditary priests seized the revenues of the heathen god as a private estate, they would rejoice in seeing the temple fall rapidly to ruin, if they did not dare to destroy it openly. The Emperor Gratian first laid aside the title of Pontifex Maximus, and removed the altar of victory from the senate house of Rome. These acts were equivalent to a declaration, that paganism was no longer the acknowledged religion of the senate and the Roman people. It was Theodosius the Great, however, who finally established the orthodox

\* ZOSIMUS, iv. 3.

church as the established religion of the empire; and in the East he succeeded completely in uniting the Christian church with the imperial administration; but in the West, the power and prejudices of the Roman aristocracy prevented his measures from attaining full success.

Theodosius, in rendering Christianity the established religion of the empire, increased the administrative and judicial authority of the bishops; and the Greeks being in possession of the orthodox church, were thus raised to the highest social position which subjects were capable of attaining. The Greek bishop, who preserved his national language and customs, was now the equal of the governor of a province, who assumed the name and language of a Roman. The court, as well as the civil administration, of Theodosius the Great, continued Roman; and the influence of the Latin clergy, and particularly of St Ambrose, prevented the cause of the Greek clergy from becoming completely identified with the imperial court. The power now conferred on the clergy, supported as it was by the popular origin of the priesthood, by the feelings of brotherhood which pervaded the Greek church, and by the strong attachment of their flocks, was generally employed to serve and protect the people, and often succeeded in tempering the unlimited despotism of the imperial authority. The clergy began to form a part of the state. A popular bishop could hardly be removed from his diocese, without the government's incurring as much danger as it formerly encountered in separating a successful general

from his army, The difficulties which the emperor Constantine met with, in removing St Athanasius from the see of Alexandria, and the necessity he was under of obtaining his 'condemnation in a general council, shew that the church already possessed the power of defending its members; and that a power had arisen which legally restrained the arbitrary will of the emperor. Still, it must not be supposed that bishops had yet acquired the privilege of being tried only by their peers. The emperor was considered the supreme judge in ecclesiastical, as well as in civil matters, and the council of Sardica was satisfied with petitioning for liberty of conscience, and freedom from the oppression of the civil magistrate.\*

Though the good effects of Christianity, on the moral and political condition of the ancient world, have never been called in question, historians have, nevertheless, more than once reproached the Christian religion with accelerating the decline of the Roman empire. A careful comparison of the progress of society in the eastern and western provinces, must lead to a different conclusion. It appears certain, that the Latin provinces were ruined by the strong attachment of the aristocracy of Rome to the generally forsaken superstitions of paganism; as, indeed, there can be very little doubt that the eastern provinces were saved by the unity with which all ranks embraced Christianity. In the western empire, the people, the Roman aristocracy,

\* A. D. 347. The "Constantinus non ausus est de causa episcopi judicare," is an idle phrase of St Augustine. MILMAN's *Hist. of Christ.* vol. ii. p. 36, 297. Paris ed. *Cod. Theodos.* xvi. 2. 12.

and the imperial administration, formed three separate sections of society, unconnected either by religious opinion or national feelings; and each was ready to enter into alliances with armed bands in the empire, in order to gratify their respective interests, prejudices, or passions. The consequence of this state of things was, that Rome and the western empire, in spite of their wealth and population, were easily conquered by comparatively feeble enemies; while Constantinople, with all its original weakness, beat back both the Goths and the Huns, in the plenitude of their power, in consequence of the union which Christianity inspired. Rome fell because the senate and the Roman people clung too long to its ancient institutions—forsaken by the great body of the population, and persecuted by the government; while Greece escaped destruction, and again revived, because she modified her political and religious institutions in conformity with the opinions of her inhabitants, and with the policy of her government. The popular element in the social organization of the Greek people, by its alliance with Christianity, conferred the energy which saved the eastern empire; the disunion of the pagans and Christians, and the disorder in the administration flowing from this disunion, ruined the western.



SECTION V. — CONDITION OF THE GREEK POPULATION  
OF THE EMPIRE FROM THE REIGN OF CONSTANTINE  
TO THAT OF THEODOSIUS THE GREAT.

THE establishment of a second capital at Constantinople, has generally been considered a severe blow to the Roman empire; but, from the time of Diocletian, Rome had ceased to be the residence of the emperors. Various motives induced the sovereigns of the empire to avoid Rome; the power and influence of the Roman senate circumscribed their authority; the turbulence and numbers of the people rendered even their persons insecure; while the immense revenues required for donatives to the pretorian guards, and for the distributions of provisions to the citizens, formed a heavy burden to the imperial treasury. When the emperor, therefore, by becoming a Christian, was placed in personal opposition to the Roman senate, there could be no longer any doubt, that Rome would have proved a very unsuitable residence for the Christian court. Constantine was compelled to choose a new capital for the empire; and in doing so he chose wisely. His selection of Byzantium was, it is true, determined by reasons connected with the imperial administration, without any reference to the influence which his choice might have on the prosperity of his subjects. Its first effect was to preserve the unity of the eastern empire. The Roman empire had, for some time previous to the reign of Constantine, given strong proofs of a tendency to separate into a number of small states. The neces-

sity of the personal control of the sovereign over the executive power, in the provinces, was so great, that Constantine himself, who had done all he could to complete the concentration of the general government, thought it necessary to divide the executive administration of the empire among his family at his death. The union effected by the centralizing of the management of the army, and the civil and judicial authority, prevented the division of the executive from partitioning the empire, until the feelings of the population of the East and the West became completely adverse.

The foundation of Constantinople was the particular act which secured the integrity of the eastern provinces, and prevented their separating into a number of independent states. It is true, that the transferring of the administration of the East more completely into the hands of the Greeks, roused the nationality of the Syrians and Egyptians into activity,—an activity, however, which seemed to present no danger to the empire. The establishment of the seat of government at Constantinople enabled the emperors to destroy many abuses, and effect numerous reforms, which recruited the resources, and revived the strength, of the eastern portion of the empire. The East, by its superior vitality, repulsed all those hordes of barbarians who ultimately subdued the West.

Society underwent some modifications in the East, in consequence of the change of the capital. It acquired a more settled and stationary form. Before the reign of Constantine, ambition had been the leading feature of the Roman state. Every body

was striving for official rank ; and the facilities of ascending the throne, or arriving at the highest dignities, were indefinitely multiplied by the rapid succession of emperors. Constantine, in giving to the government the form of a regular monarchy, introduced the hereditary principle into society ; and as ambition could no longer be gratified with the same ease as formerly, avarice, or rather rapacity, became the characteristic feature of the ruling classes. This avarice soon caused the venality of justice. The middling classes, already sinking under the general anarchy, and the fiscal oppression of the empire, were now exposed to the attacks of the aristocracy, and property became even more insecure than formerly.

The condition of Greece had, nevertheless, improved considerably in the interval which had elapsed between the invasion of the Goths in the reign of Gallienus and the time of Constantine. History, it is true, supplies only a few scattered incidents from which the fact of this improvement can be inferred ; but the gradual progress of the amelioration is satisfactorily established. When Constantine and Licinius prepared to dispute the sole possession of the empire, they assembled two powerful fleets, both of which were composed chiefly of Greek vessels. The armament of Constantine consisted of two hundred light galleys of war, and two thousand transports, and these immense naval forces were assembled at the Piræus. This selection of the Piræus as a naval station, indicates that it was no longer in the desolate condition in which it had been seen by Pausanias in the second century, and it shews

that Athens itself had recovered from whatever injury it had sustained from the Gothic expedition. To these frequent reconstructions of the Greek cities in the course of centuries, almost unnoticed by history, but accompanied by more than one flux and reflux of prosperity, we are to attribute the disappearance of the immense remains of ancient buildings and walls which must have once covered the soil, but which must have been broken up on these occasions to serve as materials for new structures.

The fleet of Constantine was collected among the Europeans; that of Licinius, which consisted of triremes, was furnished chiefly by the Asiatic and Lybian Greeks. The number of the Syrian and Egyptian vessels was comparatively smaller than would have been the case two centuries earlier. It appears, therefore, that the commerce of the Mediterranean had returned into the hands of the Greeks. The trade of central Asia, which took the route of the Black Sea, had increased in consequence of the insecure state of the Red Sea, Egypt, and Syria, and had given an impulse to Greek industry.

The carrying trade of Western Europe was again falling into Greek hands. Athens, as the capital of the old Hellenic population, from its municipal liberty and flourishing schools of learning, was rising into importance. Constantine honoured this city with marks of peculiar favour, which were conferred certainly from a regard to its political importance, and not from any admiration of the studies of its pagan philosophers. He not only ordered an annual distribution of grain to be made to the citizens of Athens,

from the imperial revenues, but he accepted the title of Strategus when offered by its inhabitants.

As soon as Julian had assumed the purple in Gaul, and marched against Constantius, he endeavoured to gain the Greek population to his party, by flattering their national feelings; and he strove to induce them to connect their cause with his own, in opposition to the Roman government of Constantius. He seems, in general, to have been received with favour by the Greeks, though his aversion to Christianity must have excited some opposition. Unless the Greek population in Europe had greatly increased in wealth and influence, during the preceding century, it could hardly have entered into the plans of Julian to take the prominent measures which he adopted to secure their support. He addressed letters to the municipalities of Athens, Corinth, and Lacedæmon, in order to persuade these cities to join his cause. The letter to the Athenians has been preserved, and is a carefully prepared political manifesto, explaining the grievances which compelled him to assume the purple. Athens, Corinth, and Lacedæmon, could not have been insignificant towns, otherwise Julian would only have rendered his cause ridiculous by addressing them at such a critical moment; and though possibly ignorant of the state of religious feeling in the popular mind, he must have been too well acquainted with the statistics of the empire, to commit any error of this kind, in public business. It may also be observed, that the care with which history has recorded the ravages caused in Greece by earthquakes, during the reigns of Valentinian and

Valens, affords conclusive testimony of the importance then attached to the well-being of the Greek population.\*

The ravages committed by the Goths, in the provinces immediately to the south of the Danube, must have turned, for a short time, to the profit of Greece. Though some bands of the barbarians often pushed their incursions into Macedonia and Thessaly, still Greece generally served as a place of retreat for the wealthy inhabitants of the invaded districts.† When Theodosius, therefore, subdued the Goths, the Greek provinces, both in Europe and Asia, were among the most flourishing portions of the empire; and the Greek population, as a body, was, without question, the most numerous and best organized part of the emperor's subjects; property, in short, was nowhere so secure as among the Greeks.

The rapacity of the imperial government had, however, undergone no diminution; and the weight of taxation was still compelling the people everywhere to encroach on the capital accumulated by former ages, and to abstain from all investments, which only promised a distant remuneration.‡ The influx into Greece of a great amount of wealth from the ruined provinces of the North, and the profits of a change in the direction of trade, were temporary causes of prosperity, and could only render the burden of the public taxes lighter for one or two

\* AMMIANUS MARCELL. xxvi. 10. ZOSIMUS, iv. 18.

† ZOSIMUS, iv. 20. EUNAPIUS, p. 51, ed. Bonn.

‡ It is needless to accumulate proofs of the nature of the fiscal administration of this period,—every page of history offers them. Julian, as an emperor, is a good authority. "Rapere non accipere sciunt agentes in rebus."—AMM. MAR. xvi. 15.

generations. The imperial treasury was sure ultimately to absorb the whole of these accidental supplies. It was, indeed, only in the ancient seats of the Hellenic race that any signs of prosperity were visible; for in Syria, Egypt, and Cyrene, the Greek population displayed evident proofs that they were suffering in the general decline of the empire. Their number was gradually diminishing, while that of the Arab inhabitants of these countries was gaining ground. Civilization was sinking to the level of Arabian society. In Asia, the Greeks received a blow from which the population never recovered. Jovian, by his treaty with Sapor the Second, ceded to Persia the five provinces of Arzanene, Mexoene, Zabdicene, Rehimene, and Corduene, and the Roman colonies of Nisibis and Zanzara in Mesopotamia. As Sapor was a fierce persecutor of the Christians, the whole Greek population of these districts was obliged to emigrate. The power of the Persian empire, and its bigoted attachment to the Magian worship, never allowed the Greeks to recover their former station; and, from this time, the natives acquired the complete ascendancy over the Greeks in all the country beyond the Euphrates. The bigoted nature of the Persian government, at this time, is not to be overlooked, in estimating the various causes which drove the trade of India through the northern regions of Asia, to the shores of the Black Sea.

SECTION VI. — COMMUNICATIONS OF THE GREEKS WITH  
COUNTRIES BEYOND THE BOUNDS OF THE ROMAN  
EMPIRE.

It would be a depressing notion, were it to be admitted, that the general degradation of mankind, after the time of the Antonines, was the effect of some inherent principle of decay, proceeding from an inevitable state of exhaustion in the condition of a highly civilized society; that a moral deficiency produced incurable corruption, and rendered good government impracticable; that these evils were irremediable, even by the influence of Christianity; and, in short, that the destruction of all the elements of the Roman world, was necessary for the regeneration of the social as well as the political system. But there is happily no ground for any such opinion. The evils of society were produced by the injustice and oppression of the Roman government, and that government was unfortunately too powerful to enable the people to force it to reform its conduct. After the Roman authority was destroyed, similar causes produced the same effects; and the revival of civilization commenced only, when the people had acquired power sufficient to enforce a respect for public opinion. History has fortunately preserved some scanty memorials of a Greek population living beyond the bounds of the Roman empire, which afford the means of estimating the effects of political causes, in modifying the character of the Greek nation. The flourishing condition of the independent Greek city of Cherson, in Tauris, furnishes ample testimony that



the state of society among the Greeks admitted of the existence of all those virtues, and of the exercise of all that energy, which are necessary to support independence.

The city of Cherson had recovered the independence which it had lost, by the conquests of the kings of Pontus, in consequence of having been admitted by the Romans to the rank of an ally, and being, from its distance and isolated situation, beyond the control of any Roman magistrates.\* It preserved the republican form of government of the Greek states, and contrived to defend its freedom for centuries, against the ambition of the kings of Bosphorus, and the attacks of the neighbouring Goths. The wealth and power of Cherson depended on its commerce, and this commerce flourished under institutions which guaranteed the rights of property. The Emperor Constantine, in his Gothic wars, did not disdain to demand the aid of this little state; and he acknowledged, with gratitude, the great assistance which the Roman empire had derived from the military forces of the Chersonites. No history could present more instructive lessons than that of the Greek colonies in the Tauric Chersonesus, during the decline of the empire, and it is deeply to be regretted that none exists. About three hundred and fifty years before the Christian era, the kingdom of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, one of these Greek colonies, was in a flourishing agricultural condition; and its monarch had been enabled to prevent a famine at Athens, by supplying that city with two millions

\* Cherson was a short distance to the west of the modern Sevastopol. See GIBBON, iii. 125, and PLINY, *Hist. Nat.* lib. iv. c. 26.

bushels of wheat in a single season.\* In the course of a thousand years, all had changed around: the declining population of the south had enabled the rude people of the north and east to crush all industry beyond the walls of the Grecian cities; but these cities, even in this altered world, preserved their liberty and industry. The fertile fields, which had fed the Athenians and the islanders of the Archipelago, were converted into pasturage for the droves of cattle of the Goths; but the commerce of the Chersonites, still supplied them with wealth to import their corn, oil, and wine, from the provinces of the Byzantine empire.

The commercial Greeks of the empire began now to feel, that there were countries in which they could live and prosper, beyond the power of the Roman administration. Christianity had penetrated far into the East, and Christians were every where united by the closest ties. The speculations of trade began to occupy a more important place in society, while the enormous riches of the Roman nobility was now nearly annihilated by confiscations, and trade carried many Greeks of education among a variety of people, little inferior to the Romans in civilization, and surpassing them in wealth. It was impossible for these travellers to avoid examining the conduct of the imperial administration, with the critical eye of men who had viewed various countries, and weighed the merits of different systems of fiscal government. For them, therefore, oppression had certain limits, from which, when transgressed, they would have escaped by transporting themselves and

\* Воевский's *Public Economy of Athens*, l. 121.

their fortunes beyond the reach of the imperial tax-gatherers. The inhabitants of the western empire could entertain no similar hope of avoiding oppression.

About the time of Constantine, the Greeks carried on an extensive commerce with the northern shores of the Black Sea, Armenia, India, Arabia, and Ethiopia, and some of the merchants carried their adventures as far as Ceylon. A Greek colony had been established in the island of Socotra, (Dioscorides,) in the time of the Ptolemies, as a station for the Indian trade; and this colony, mixed with a number of Syrians, still continued to exist, in spite of the troubles raised by the Saracens on the northern shores of the Red Sea, and their wars with the emperors, particularly with Valens.\* The travels of the philosopher Metrodorus, and the missionary labours of the Indian bishop Theophilus, prove the existence of a regular intercourse between the empire, and India and Ethiopia, by the waters of the Red Sea. The curiosity of the philosopher, and the enthusiasm of the missionary, were excited by the reports of the ordinary traders; while their enterprises were every where facilitated by the mercantile speculations of a regular traffic. Feelings of religion at this time, extended the efforts of the Christians, and opened up new channels for commerce. The kingdom of Ethiopia was converted to Christianity

\* SOCRAT. iv. 36. *Sozomen. Ecc. Hist.* vi. 38. The Indies were in ancient times divided into the East and West, according to their direction from the Straits of Babelmandel; and Ethiopia is often called India. The inhabitants of Dioscorides spoke Syriac in the middle of the fourth century, and Greek, when visited by Cosmas Indicopleustes in the sixth. *LEBEAU, Histoire du Bas-Empire*, l. 441, with the notes of Saint-Martin.

by two Greek slaves, who rose to the highest dignities in the state, and whose influence could not fail to be employed in forming new means of communication with the heathens in the south of Africa, and assisting the Greek traders, as well as the Christian missionaries, in penetrating into countries whither no Roman had ever ventured.

SECTION VII. — EFFECT OF THE SEPARATION OF THE  
EASTERN AND WESTERN EMPIRES ON THE GREEK  
NATION.

THE separation of the eastern and western portions of the Roman empire into two independent states, under Arcadius and Honorius, was the last step, in a long series of events, which seemed to secure the re-establishment of the independence of the Greek nation. The interest of the sovereigns of the eastern empire became intimately connected with the fortunes of their Greek subjects. The Greek language began to be generally spoken by the court, and Greek feelings of nationality gradually made their way, not only into the administration and the army, but even into the family of the emperors. The numbers of the Greek population, in the eastern empire, gave a unity of feeling to the inhabitants, a nationality of character to the government, and a degree of power to the Christian church, which were completely wanting in the ill-cemented structure of the West. New vigour seemed on the point of being infused into the imperial government, as circumstances strongly

impelled the emperors to participate in the feelings and national interests of their subjects. Nor were these hopes entirely delusive. The slow and majestic decline of the Roman empire was arrested in the East; and a singular combination of events had occurred, as if expressly to teach the historical lesson, that the Roman government had fallen, through its own faults, by having consumed the capital of its own revenues, and not from any exterior power—since the strength of the barbarians had only been sufficient to occupy the deserts which the emperors had created.

As soon as the eastern empire was definitively separated from the western, the popular organization of the Greek municipalities, and the direct connection of the body of the people with the clergy, began to exercise a marked influence on the general government. Though the imperial administration continued, in all fiscal matters, to maintain the old axiom, that the people were the serfs of the state; yet the emperors, from the want of an aristocracy, whom they might now plunder, were thrown back on the immediate support of the people, whose good will could not be neglected so long as the higher dignitaries of the church were imbued with national feelings. It is not to be supposed, that in the general decline of the empire, any disorganization of the frame of civil society was manifest in any of the various nations which lived under the Roman government. The numbers of the population had, indeed, every where diminished, but no convulsions had affected the moral condition of the people. Domestic virtue

was by no means rarer than it had been in brighter periods of history. The even tenor of life flowed calmly on, in a great portion of the empire, from generation to generation. Philosophical and metaphysical speculations had, in the absence of the more active pursuits of political life, been the chief occupation of the higher orders; and when the Christian religion became universal, it gradually directed the whole attention of the educated to theological questions. These studies certainly exercised a favourable influence on the general morality of mankind, and the tone of society was characterized by a purity of manners, and a degree of charitable feeling, which have probably never been surpassed. Nothing can more remarkably display the extent to which the principles of humanity had penetrated, than the writings of the Emperor Julian. In the fervour of his pagan enthusiasm, he continually borrows Christian sentiments to clothe them in a heathen dress.

The complaints made by the people of the oppression of the public administration, was now, by the common consent of the prince and people, directed against the abuses of the system, by the revenue officers. The historians of this period, and the decrees of the emperors themselves, charge these officers with producing the general misery, by the trifling peculations which they committed; but no emperor yet thought of devoting his attention to a careful reformation of the system which allowed such disorders. The indignation of the emperor, however, who threatens the agents of the treasury with death, if they indulge in extortion, speaks indirectly in

favour of the state of society, in which the vices of the administration were so severely felt.\*

An anecdote often illustrates the condition of society more correctly than a dissertation, though there is always some danger that an anecdote has found its place in history, from the singularity of the picture which it presents. The one now selected, seems, however, interesting, as affording a faithful picture of general manners, and as giving an accurate view of the most prominent defects in the Roman administration. Acyndinus, the prefect of the Orient, enjoyed the reputation of an able, just, and severe governor. He collected the public revenues with inflexible justice, but with a sternness which must have depopulated, as well as impoverished his prefecture. In the course of his ordinary administration, he threatened one of the inhabitants of Antioch, already in prison, with death, in case he should fail to discharge, within a fixed term, a debt due to the imperial treasury. His power was admitted, and his habitual attention to the claims of the fisc, gave public defaulters at Antioch no hope of escaping with any punishment short of slavery, which was civil death. The prisoner was married to a beautiful woman, and the parties were united by the warmest affection. The circumstances of their case, and their situation in life, excited some attention. A man of great wealth offered at last to pay the husband's debt, on condition that he should obtain the favours of his beautiful wife. The proposal excited the indignation of the lady, but when

\* *Cod. Theodos. i. t. vii. lib. 1.* Cessent jam nunc rapaces officialium manus, cessent, inquam : nam si moniti non cessaverint, gladiis præceduntur.

it was communicated to her imprisoned husband, he thought life too valuable not to be preserved by such a sacrifice; and his prayers had more effect with his wife, than the wealth or the solicitations of her admirer. The libertine, though wealthy, proved to be mean and avaricious, and contrived to cheat the lady with a bag filled with sand instead of gold. The unfortunate wife, baffled in her hopes of saving her husband, threw herself at the feet of the Prefect Acyndinus, to whom she revealed the whole of the disgraceful transaction. The prefect was deeply moved by the evil effects of his severity; and, struck by the variety of crimes which he had caused, attempted to render justice, by apportioning a punishment to the culprits, suitable to the nature of the offence of each. As the penalty of his own severity, he condemned himself to pay the debt due to the imperial treasury. He sentenced the fraudulent seducer to transfer to the injured lady, the estate which had supplied him with the wealth which he had so infamously employed. The debtor was immediately released—he appeared to be sufficiently punished by his imprisonment and shame.\*

The severity of the revenue laws, and the arbitrary power of the prefects in matters of finance, are well represented in this anecdote. The injury inflicted on society by a provincial administration so constituted must have been incalculable. Even the justice and disinterestedness of such a prefect as Acyndinus, required to be called into action by extraordinary crimes, and, after all, virtues such as his could afford no very sure guarantee against oppression.

\* LE BEAU, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, i. 414, and the authorities referred to.



In spite of the great progress which Christianity had made in all classes, there still existed, in the East, a numerous body of pagans among the higher ranks of the old aristocracy, who maintained several schools of philosophy, in which a species of allegorical pantheism was the religion taught. The pure morality inculcated, and the honourable lives of the teachers in these schools, enabled these philosophers to find votaries long after paganism might be considered virtually extinct as a national religion. While the pagans still possessed a succession of distinguished literary characters, a considerable body of the Christians were beginning to proclaim an open contempt of all learning which was not contained in the Scriptures. This fact is connected with the increased power of the national feelings in all the provinces, and with the aversion of the natives both to the Roman government and the Greek nation. The Greeks having long been in possession of the privileges of Roman citizens, called themselves Romans, and applied, in Europe, the name of Hellenes exclusively to the followers of paganism; Christians and Hellenes, consequently, became distinctive terms, even in Hellas — the name which Greece still preserved.

It is necessary here to notice, that, from the time of Constantine, the two great principles of law and religion began to exert a favourable influence on Greek society, by their effect in moderating the despotic power of the imperial administration, in its ordinary communications with the people. The lawyers and the clergy acquired a fixed position in the state, based on their organization as political

bodies; and thus the branches of government with which they were connected, were, in some degree, emancipated from arbitrary changes, and approached a systematic or constitutional form. The dispensation of justice, though it remained entirely dependent on the executive government, was placed in the hands of a distinct class; and as the law required a long and laborious study, its administration followed a steady and invariable course, which it was difficult for any other branch of the executive to interrupt. The lawyers and judges formed in the same school, and guided by the same written rules, were placed under the influence of a limited public opinion, which at least insured a certain degree of self-respect, supported by professional interests, but founded on general principles of equity. The body of lawyers not only obtained a complete control over the judicial proceedings of the tribunals, and restrained the injustice of proconsuls and prefects, but they even assigned limits to the wild despotism exercised by the earlier emperors. The department of general legislation was likewise intrusted to lawyers; and the good effects of this arrangement is apparent, from the conformity of the decrees of the worst emperors, after this period, with the principles of justice.

The power of the clergy, originally resting on a more popular and purer basis than that of the law, became at last so great, that it suffered the inevitable corruption of all irresponsible authority intrusted to humanity. The power of the bishops equalled that of the provincial governors in weight, and was not under the constant control of the imperial adminis-

tration. To gain such a position, intrigue, simony, and popular sedition, were often employed. Supported by the people, a bishop ventured to resist the emperor himself; supported by the emperor and the people, he ventured even to neglect the principles of Christianity. Theophilus, the patriarch of Alexandria, even dared to ordain the Platonic philosopher, Synesius, bishop of Ptolemais, in Cyrenaïca, before he believed in the resurrection.\*

In estimating the relative extent of the influence exercised by law and religion on the social condition of the Greeks, it must be remarked, that Greek was the language of the Eastern church, from the time of its connection with the imperial administration; while, unfortunately for the law, Latin continued to be the language of legal business in the East, until after the time of Justinian. This fact explains the comparatively trifling influence exercised by the legal class, in establishing the supremacy of the Greek nation in the Eastern empire, and accounts also for the undue influence which the clergy were enabled to acquire in civil affairs. Had the language of the law been that of the people, the Eastern lawyers, supported by the municipal institutions and democratic feelings of the Greeks, could hardly have failed, in combining with the church, to form a systematic and constitutional barrier, against the arbitrary exercise of the imperial authority. The want of a national system of law was a defect in the social condition of the Greeks which they never supplied, until the decay of civilization, and the

\* SHARPE'S *Egypt under the Romans*, 192.

decline of wealth and knowledge, had so weakened the power of public opinion, as to make the court of Constantinople the centre of the nation.

Slavery continued to exist in the same manner as in earlier times; and the slave trade formed a very important branch of the commerce of the Roman empire. It is true that the humanity of a philosophical age, and the precepts of the Gospel, had introduced a few restraints on the most barbarous features of the power possessed by the Romans over the lives and persons of their slaves; still, freemen were sold as slaves by government if they failed to pay their taxes, and parents were allowed to sell their own children. A new and more systematic slavery than the old personal one had grown up in the rural districts, in consequence of the fiscal arrangements of the empire. The public registers shewed the numbers of slaves employed in the cultivation of every farm; and the proprietor was bound to pay a certain tax for these slaves according to their employment. Even when the land was cultivated by free peasants, the proprietor was responsible to the fisc for their capitation tax. As the interest of the government and of the proprietor, therefore, coincided to restrain the free labourer from abandoning the cultivation of the land, he gradually sank into the condition of a serf; while, on the other hand, in the case of slaves employed in farming, the government had an interest in preventing the proprietor from withdrawing their labour from the cultivation of the soil: these slaves, therefore, rose to the rank of serfs. The cultivators of the soil became, for this reason, attached to it, and their

slavery ceased to be personal; they acquired rights, and possessed a station in society. This was the first step made by mankind towards the abolition of slavery.\*

The double origin of serfs must be carefully observed, in order to explain many apparently contradictory expressions of the Roman law. There is a law of Constantius preserved in Justinian's code, which shews that slaves were then attached to the soil, and could not be separated from it. There is a law, also, of the Emperor Anastasius, which proves that, in his time, a freeman, who had lived for thirty years cultivating the property of another, was prohibited from quitting that property; but he remained in other respects a freeman.† The cultivator was called by the Romans *colonus*, and might, consequently, be either a slave or a freeman. His condition, however, was soon so completely determined by special laws, that its original constitution was lost.‡

\* It is impossible to allude to ancient slavery without mentioning the excellent work of BLAIR, *Inquiry into the State of Slavery amongst the Romans*. Edin. 1833. See also, *De l'Abolition de l'Esclavage ancien en Occident*, par E. BIAU.

† *Codex Just. de Agriculis et Cens.* l. 2. and l. 18.

‡ Some of the opinions of Savigny, in his profound essay, *Ueber den Roemischen Colonat*, (Abhand. Acad. von Berlin, 1822,) seem to overlook this double origin of the condition of serfs after the time of Constantine. The interests of the revenue being against the free farmer, and in favour of the slave cultivator, naturally rendered the law cruel to the one, and humane to the other.

## SECTION VIII.—ATTEMPTS OF THE GOTHs TO ESTABLISH THEMSELVES IN GREECE.

THE first great immigration of the Goths to the south of the Danube took place with the permission of the emperor Valens ; but, as none of the measures necessary to insure their tranquil settlement in the country were adopted by the Roman government, these troublesome colonists were soon converted into dangerous enemies. Being ill supplied with provisions, and finding the country unprotected, they began to plunder Mœsia, Thrace, and Macedonia, for subsistence ; and, at last, imboldened by their success, they extended their incursions over the whole country, from the walls of Constantinople to the borders of Thessaly and Illyria. The Roman troops were defeated. The Emperor Valens, advancing inconsiderately in the confidence of victory, was vanquished in the battle of Adrianople, and ignominiously perished. The massacre of a considerable number of Goths, retained in Asia as hostages and mercenaries, roused the fury of their victorious countrymen, and gave an unusual degree of cruelty to the war of devastation which they carried on for three years. As soon as Theodosius the Great assumed the command of the armies in the East, he put an end to these disorders. The Goths were still unable to resist the Roman troops when properly conducted. Theodosius compelled their finest bodies of warriors to enter the imperial service, and either destroyed the remaining bands, or compelled them to escape beyond the Danube.

The depopulated state of the empire induced Theodosius to establish colonies of the Goths, whom he had forced to submit, in Phrygia and Lydia. Thus, it appears that even the Roman emperors were the first to replace the old population of the empire, by new races of inhabitants. Theodosius granted peculiar privileges to the dangerous foreigners whom he introduced, and left these hordes of barbarians in possession of their national institutions, merely on condition, that they should furnish a certain number of recruits for the military service of the state. When the native population of the empire was gradually diminishing, some suspicion must surely have been entertained that this diminution was principally caused by the conduct of the government ; yet so deeply rooted was the opposition of interests between the government and the governed, and so distrustful were the emperors of their subjects, that they preferred confiding their defence to foreign mercenaries, to reducing the amount, and changing the nature, of the fiscal contributions, by which they might have secured the support, and awakened the energy of the natives.

The Roman despotism had left the people almost without any political rights to defend, and with but few public duties which they were willing to perform ; and while the free inhabitants deplored the decline of the agricultural population, and lamented their own degeneracy, which induced them to crowd into the towns, they either did not perceive, or did not dare to proclaim, that these evils were caused by the imperial administration, and could only be remedied

by some authority, which could secure a more equitable system of government. It seems, indeed, that mankind, in order to possess the combination of moral and physical courage necessary to defend their property and rights against foreign invasion, must feel convinced, that they have the power of securing that property and those rights against all domestic injustice, and arbitrary oppression.

The Goths had commenced their relations with the Roman empire before the middle of the third century; and during the period they had dwelt in the countries adjoining the Roman provinces, they had made great progress in civilization, and their chiefs in military and political knowledge.\* From the time Aurelian abandoned to them the province of Dacia beyond the Danube, they became the lords of a fertile, cultivated, and well-peopled country. As the great body of the agricultural population had been left behind by the Romans when they vacated the province, the Goths suddenly found themselves the proprietors of lands, which, to men of their simple habits of life, were splendid possessions. The anarchical, though mild, government of the Goths proved, however, every where more ruinous than the systematic oppression of Rome. Still, in Dacia, the Goths were enabled to improve their arms and discipline, and to assume the ideas and manners of a barbarous aristocracy. Though they remained always inferior to the Romans in military science and civil arts, they were their equals in bravery, and their superiors in honesty and truth, so that the Goths

\* *Excerpta e Petri Pat. Hist.* p. 124. ed. Bonn. A. D. 230.



were always received with favour in the imperial service. It must not be forgotten, that no comparison ought, however, to be established between the Gothic contingents and the provincial conscripts. The Gothic warriors were selected from a race devoted exclusively to arms, who looked with contempt on all industrious occupations; while the native troops of the empire were taken from the poorest peasantry, torn from their cottages, and mingled with slaves and the dissolute classes of the cities, compelled to enlist from hunger and a love of idleness. The number and importance of the Gothic forces in the Roman armies, during the reign of Theodosius, enabled several of their commanders to attain the highest rank; and among these officers, the most distinguished, by birth, talents, and national influence, was Alaric.\*

The death of Theodosius threw the administration of the eastern empire into the hands of Rufinus, the minister of Arcadius; and that of the western, into those of Stilicho, the tutor of Honorius. The discordant elements which composed the Roman empire began to reveal all the incongruities of their union under these two ministers. Rufinus was a civilian from Gaul; and from his Roman habits and feelings, and western prejudices, disagreeable to the Greeks. Stilicho was of barbarian descent, and consequently, equally unacceptable to the aristocracy of Rome; but he was an able and popular soldier, and had served with distinction both in the East and in the West. As Stilicho was the husband of the niece

\* ZOSIMUS, v. 5.

and adopted daughter of Theodosius the Great, his alliance with the imperial family gave him an unusual influence in the administration. The two ministers hated one another with all the violence of aspiring ambition; and, unrestrained by any feeling of patriotism, each was more intent on ruining his rival, than on serving the state. The greater number of the Roman officers, civil and military, were equally inclined to sacrifice every public duty for the gratification of their avarice or ambition.

At this time, Alaric, partly from disgust at not receiving all the preferment which he expected, and partly in the hope of compelling the government of the Eastern empire to agree to his terms, retired towards the frontiers, and assembled a force sufficiently large to enable him to act independently of all authority. Availing himself of the disputes between the ministers of the two emperors, and perhaps instigated by Rufinus or Stilicho to aid their intrigues, he established himself in the provinces to the south of the Danube. In the year 395, he advanced to the walls of Constantinople; but the movement was evidently a feint, as he must have known his inability to attack a large and populous city defended by a powerful garrison, and amply supplied by sea even with every luxury. After this demonstration, Alaric marched into Thrace and Macedonia. Rufinus has been accused of assisting Alaric's invasion; and his negotiations with him while in the vicinity of Constantinople, have been considered as authorizing the suspicion. When the Goth found the northern provinces exhausted, he resolved to invade Greece and Peloponesus, which, having long enjoyed a pro-

found tranquillity, were then in a flourishing condition. The cowardly behaviour of Antiochus the proconsul of Achæa, and of Gerontius the commander of the Roman troops, both friends of Rufinus, was considered a confirmation of his treachery. Thermopylæ was left unguarded, and Alaric entered Greece without encountering any resistance.

The ravages committed by Alaric's army have been described in fearful terms; villages and towns were burnt, the men were murdered, and the women and children carried away captive by the Goths. But even this invasion affords proofs, that Greece had recovered from the desolate condition in which it had been seen by Pausanias. Thebes was in such a state of defence, that Alaric could not venture to besiege it, but hurried forward to Athens. He entered that city without opposition: his conquest was probably assisted by the treacherous arrangements with Rufinus, and by a treaty with the municipal authorities, which secured the town from being plundered by the Gothic soldiers. The tale recorded by Zosimus of the Christian Alaric having been induced by the apparition of the goddess Minerva to spare Athens, is refuted by the direct testimony of other writers, who mention the capture of the city.\* The fact, that the depredations of Alaric hardly exceed the ordinary license of a rebellious general, is, at the same time, perfectly established. The public buildings, and monuments

\* The manner in which Zosimus passes over the destruction of Eleusis by Alaric, saying expressly that he committed no ravages in Attica, deprives his narrative of all credit, i. 5. HIERONYMI, *Ep.* 60, tom. 1. p. 343. PHILOSTORGIUS, xii. 2. CLAUDIANUS, *In Rufin.* ii. 191. SYNES. *Epist.* 136.

of ancient splendour, suffered no wanton destruction from his visit; but there can be no doubt that Alaric and his troops levied heavy contributions on the city and its inhabitants. Athens evidently owed its good treatment to the strength of its population, which imposed some respect on the Goths; for the rest of Attica did not escape the usual fate of the districts through which the barbarians marched. The town of Eleusis, and the great temple of Ceres were plundered, and then destroyed. Whether this work of devastation was caused by the Christian monks who attended the Gothic host, and excited their bigoted Arians to avenge the cause of religion on the deserted temples of the Pagans at Eleusis, as they had been compelled to spare the shrines at Athens, or whether it was the effect of the eager desire of plunder, and wanton love of destruction, among a disorderly body of troops, it has not been ascertained, and is not very material. Bigoted monks, avaricious officers, and disorderly soldiers, were numerous in Alaric's band.

Gerontius, who had abandoned the pass of Thermopylæ, took no measures to defend the Isthmus of Corinth, or the difficult passes of Mount Geranion, so that Alaric marched unopposed into the Peloponnesus, and, in a short time, captured almost every city in it without meeting with any resistance. Corinth, Argos, and Sparta, were all plundered by the Goths. The security in which Greece had long remained, the general poverty of the inhabitants, and the policy of the government, which discouraged their independent institutions, had all conspired to leave the province without

protection, and the people without arms. The facility which Alaric met with in effecting his conquest, and his views, which were directed to obtain an establishment in the empire as an imperial officer, or feudatory governor, rendered the conduct of his army not that of avowed enemies. Yet it often happened, that they laid waste every thing in the line of their march, burnt the villages, and massacred the inhabitants.\*

Alaric passed the winter in the Peloponnesus without encountering any opposition from the people; yet many of the Greek cities still kept a body of municipal police, which might surely have taken the field, had the imperial officers endeavoured to organize a regular resistance, on the part of the country districts.† The moderation of the Goth, and the treason of the Roman governor, seem both attested by this circumstance. The government of the eastern empire had fallen into such disorder at the commencement of the reign of Arcadius, that even after Rufinus had been assassinated by the army, the new ministers of the empire gave themselves very little concern about the fate of Greece. Honorius had a more able, active, and ambitious minister in Stilicho, and he determined to punish the Goths for their audacity in daring to establish themselves in the empire, without the imperial authority. In the spring of the year 396, he assembled a fleet at Ravenna, and transported his army directly to Corinth, which the Goths do not appear to have garrisoned, and where, probably, the

\* EUNAPIUS, *In Prisc.* i. 17, ed. Boissonade.

† PROCOPIUS, *De ædificiis*, iv. 2.

Roman governor still resided. Stilicho's army, aided by the inhabitants, soon cleared the whole country of the Gothic bands, and Alaric drew together the remains of his diminished army in the elevated plains of Mount Pholoe, which has always been a favourite point of retreat for the northern invaders of Greece.\* Stilicho contented himself with occupying the passes with his army; but his carelessness, and the relaxed discipline of his troops, soon afforded the watchful Alaric an opportunity of escaping with his army, and all the plunder which they had collected, and, by forced marches, of gaining the Isthmus of Corinth.†

Alaric succeeded in conducting his army into Epirus, where he disposed his forces to govern and plunder that province, as he had expected to rule Peloponnesus. Stilicho was supposed to have winked at his proceedings, in order to leave a dangerous enemy in the eastern empire, the fear of whom would render his own services indispensable. But Alaric availed himself so ably of his position, to negotiate with Eutropius, the new minister at Constantinople, that he succeeded in obtaining the appointment of commander-in-chief of the imperial forces in Eastern Illyricum, which he held for four years.‡ During this time he prepared his troops to seek his fortune in the western empire.§ The military commanders, whether Roman or bar-

\* The Albanian colony of Lalla.

† Zosimus rather contradicts the picture which he had drawn of Alaric's ravages in Greece, when he represents Stilicho as finding the means of luxury and debauchery at hand. v. 7.

‡ Greece formed a part of Eastern Illyricum.

§ CLAUDIANUS, *De Bell. Gil.* v. 535.

barian, were equally indifferent to the fate of the people whom they were employed to defend; and the Greeks appear to have suffered equal oppression from the armies of Stilicho and Alaric.

The condition of the European Greeks underwent a great change for the worse, in consequence of this unfortunate plundering expedition of the Goths. The destruction of their property, and the loss of their slaves, were so great, that the evil could only be slowly repaired under the best government, and with perfect security of their possessions. In the miserable condition to which the eastern empire was reduced, this was hopeless; and the mass of the population of Greece, never again attained the prosperous condition in which Alaric had found it, nor were many of the cities which he had destroyed ever again rebuilt. The ruin of roads, aqueducts, cisterns, and public buildings, which had been erected by the accumulation of capital in prosperous and enterprising ages, was an irreparable loss, which could never be repaired by a diminished and impoverished population. History generally preserves but few traces of the devastations which affect only the people; but the sudden misery inflicted on Greece was so great, when contrasted with her previous tranquillity, that testimonies of her sufferings are to be found in the laws of the empire, when her condition began to excite the compassion of the government, during the reign of Theodosius the Second. There is a law which exempts the cities of Illyricum from the charge of contributing towards the expenses of the public spectacles at Constantinople, as the province had been plundered by the hostilities of the Goths,

and oppressed by the administration of Alaric. There is another law which proves that many estates were without owners, in consequence of the depopulation caused by the Gothic ravages. There is a third law, also, which relieves Greece from two-thirds of the ordinary contributions to government, in consequence of the poverty to which the inhabitants were reduced.\*

This unfortunate period is as remarkable for the devastation committed by the Huns in Asia, as for those of the Goths in Europe, and marks the commencement of the rapid decline of the Greek race, and of Greek civilization throughout the empire. While Alaric was laying waste the provinces of European Greece, an army of Huns from the banks of the Tanais, penetrated through Armenia into Cappadocia, and extended their ravages over Syria, Cilicia, and Mesopotamia. Antioch, at last, resisted their assaults, and arrested their progress; but they took many Greek cities of importance, and inflicted an incalculable injury on the population of the provinces which they entered. In a few months they retreated to their seats on the Palus Mæotis, having commenced the ruin of the richest and most populous portion of the civilized world.†

\* *Cod. Theodos.* x. t. viii. l. 5; xi. l. 33; xii. l. 172.

† PHILOSTORGIUS, ix. 8. LE BEAU, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, v. 101.



SECTION IX.—THE NATIONAL FEELINGS OF THE GREEKS  
ARRESTED THE CONQUESTS OF THE NORTHERN BAR-  
BARIANS.

FROM the time of Alaric's ravages in the Grecian provinces, until the accession of Justinian, the government of the East assumed more of a national character than at any other period of the empire. A feeling that the interests of the emperor and his subjects were identical, began to become prevalent throughout the Greek population. This feeling was greatly strengthened, by the attention which the government paid to improving the civil condition of its subjects. The judicial and financial administration had received, during this period, a greater degree of power, as well as a more corporate organization; and the whole strength of the government no longer reposed on the military establishments. Rebellions of the army became of rarer occurrence, and were usually connected with civil intrigues. A slight glance at the history of the eastern empire is sufficient to shew, that the court of Constantinople possessed a degree of authority over its most powerful officers, and a direct connection with its distant provinces, which no longer existed in the western empire.

Still, the successful resistance which the eastern empire offered to the establishment of the northern nations, must be attributed, more to the national spirit of the Greek population, aided by their geographical position, than to the measures adopted by the political government, or to the military force

which it possessed. The division of the European and Asiatic provinces, opposed physical difficulties to invaders, while it afforded great facilities for defence, retreat, and renewed attack, to the Roman forces, as long as they could maintain a naval superiority. These circumstances unfortunately cherished the worst vice of the imperial government, at the very moment when the evils of the system became apparent, by rendering money an important element in the war, since it was necessary to purchase, for the armies, facilities of transport, and means of concentration, in cases both of danger, defeat, or victory. The great distance of the various frontiers, though it increased the difficulty of preventing every hostile incursion, hindered any rebellious general from uniting under his command the whole forces of the empire. The control which the government was thus enabled to exercise over all its military officers, secured a regular system of discipline, by centralizing the services of equipping, provisioning, and paying the soldiers; and the direct connection between the troops and the government could no longer be counteracted by the personal influence which a general might acquire, in consequence of a victorious campaign.

The age was one of war and conquest; yet, with all the aspirations and passions of a despotic and military state, the eastern empire was, by its financial position, compelled to act on the defensive, and to devote all its attention to rendering the military subordinate to the civil power, in order to save the empire from being eaten up by its own defenders. Its measures were at last successful;

the northern invaders were repulsed, the army was rendered obedient, and the Greek nation was saved from the fate of the Romans. The army became gradually attached to the government as the source of pay and honour; and it was rather from a general feature of all despotic governments, than from any peculiarity in the Eastern empire, that the soldiery frequently appear strongly attached to the imperial power, but perfectly indifferent to the person of the despot. The condition of the western empire requires to be contrasted with that of the eastern, in order to see the danger of the crisis, which the government of Constantinople had the ability to avert. Yet, even in the West, in spite of all the disorganization of the government, the empire suffered more from the misconduct of the Roman officers, than from the strength of its assailants. Even Genseric could hardly have penetrated into Africa, unless he had been invited by Boniface, and assisted by his rebellion; while the imperial officers in Britain, Gaul, and Spain, who, towards the end of the reign of Honorius, assumed the imperial title, laid those provinces open to the incursions of the barbarians. The government of the western empire was really destroyed, and the frame of political society was broken in pieces, some time before its final conquest had been achieved by foreigners. The Roman principle of aristocratic rule was unable to supply that bond of union, which the national organization of the Greeks furnished in the East.

The geographical features of the eastern empire exercised an important influence on its fate. Both

in Europe and Asia, the extensive provinces are bounded or divided by chains of mountains, which terminate on the shores of the Adriatic, the Black Sea, or the Mediterranean, and which compel all invaders to advance by certain well known roads and passes. The ordinary communication by land between neighbouring provinces, is frequently tedious and difficult; and the inhabitants of many mountain districts had retained their national character, institutions, and language, almost unaltered, during the whole period of the Roman sway. In these provinces, the population was active in resisting every foreign invader; and the conviction that their mountains afforded them an impregnable fortress, ensured the success of their efforts. Thus, the feelings and prejudices of the portion of the inhabitants of the empire, which had always been opposed to the Roman government, operated powerfully to support the imperial administration. These circumstances, and some others, which acquired strength as the general civilization of the empire declined, concurred to augment the importance of the native population existing in the different provinces of the eastern empire, and prevented the Greeks from acquiring a moral, as well as a political, ascendancy in the distant provinces. In Europe, the Thracians distinguished themselves by their hardihood and military propensities. In Asia, the Isaurians began to occupy, in the history of the empire, a place which had been acquired by their independent spirit and warlike character. The Armenians, the Syrians, and the Egyptians, all began to engage in a rivalry with the Greeks, and

to contest their superiority even in literary and ecclesiastical knowledge. These circumstances exercised considerable influence in preventing the court of Constantinople from identifying itself with the Greek people, and enabled the eastern emperors to cling to the maxims and the pride of ancient Rome, as they still held the sovereignty over so many and various races of mankind.

The wealth of the eastern empire was a principal means of its defence against the barbarians. While it invited their invasions, it repulsed their attacks, or bribed their forbearance. It was usefully employed in securing the retreat of those bodies of barbarians, who, after having broken through the Roman lines of defence on the frontiers, found themselves unable to seize any fortified post, or to extend the circle of their ravages. Rather than run the risk of engaging with the Roman troops, by delaying their march for the purpose of plundering the open country, they were often content to retire without committing any disorders, on receiving a payment in money, and a supply of provisions. These sums were generally so inconsiderable, that it would have been the height of folly in the government to refuse to pay them, and thus expose its subjects to ruin and slavery; but as it was evident, that the success of the barbarians would invite new invasions, it is surprising that the imperial administration should not have taken better measures, to place the inhabitants of the exposed districts in a condition to defend themselves, and thus secure the treasury against a repetition of this ignominious expenditure. But the jealousy with

which the Roman government regarded its own subjects, was the natural consequence of the oppression with which it knew they were ruled; and no danger seemed so great as that of intrusting the Greek population with arms.

The commerce of the eastern empire was the chief source of its metallic revenues, and this commerce embraced, at this time, almost the trade of the world. The manufactories of the East supplied western Europe with many articles of daily use, and the merchants of the East carried on an extensive carrying trade with central Asia.\* By means of the Red Sea, the productions of Southern Africa and India were collected and distributed by the numerous peoples, who inhabited the shores within and without the Straits of Babelmandel—countries which were then far richer, more populous, and in a much higher state of civilization than at present. The precious metals, which had become rare in Europe, from the stagnation of trade, and the circumscribed exchanges which take place in a rude society, were still kept in actual circulation by the various wants of the merchants, who brought their commodities from far distant lands. The Island of Jotaba, which was a free city in the Red Sea, became a mercantile position of great importance; and from the title of the collectors of the imperial customs, which were exacted in its port, the eastern emperors must have levied a duty of ten per cent, on all the merchandise destined for the Roman empire, or for western Europe.† This

\* *Cod. Theod.* xii. 12. 2.

† MALCHI *Hist.* p. 232, ed. Bonn. The position of Jotaba seems still unknown.

island was occupied by the Arabs for some time, but returned under the power of the eastern empire, during the reign of Anastasius.\* So great was the trade in the Red Sea, in the fifth and sixth centuries, that one of the sovereigns of Ethiopia was able to collect seven hundred native vessels, and six hundred merchant ships with the Roman flag, in order to transport his army into Arabia; and many other incidental testimonies exist, proving the great extent of this commerce at the commencement of the sixth century.†

As the eastern empire generally maintained a decided naval superiority over its enemies, the commerce of the empire seldom suffered any serious interruption.‡ The pirates, who infested the Hellespont about the year 438, and the Vandals under Genseric, who ravaged the coasts of Greece in 466 and 475, were more dreaded by the people on account of their cruelty, than by the government or the merchants, in consequence of their success, which was never great.§ In the general disorder which reigned over the whole of western Europe, the only depositories for merchandise that could be formed in security, were in the eastern empire. The emperors saw the importance of this commercial influence, and made considerable exertions to support the naval superiority of the empire. Theodosius the Second assembled a fleet of eleven hundred transports, when he proposed to attack the

\* THEOPHANES, *Chron.* p. 121, ed. Paris.

† *Acta Martyr.* tom. 5, 1042.

‡ MARCELLINUS, *Chron.*

§ PROCOPIUS, *De Bello Vand.* l. 5. MALCHUS, p. 260, ed. Bonn.

Vandals in Africa.\* The armament of Leo the Great, for the same purpose, was on a still larger scale, and formed one of the greatest naval forces ever assembled by the Roman power.†

SECTION X. — DECLINING CONDITION OF THE GREEK  
POPULATION IN THE EUROPEAN PROVINCES OF THE  
EASTERN EMPIRE.

THE ravages inflicted by the northern nations on the frontier provinces were so continual, that the agricultural population was almost destroyed in the countries immediately to the south of the Danube, and the inhabitants of Thrace and Macedonia greatly diminished. The declining trade caused by decreased consumption, poverty, and insecurity of property, soon lowered the scale of civilization in the whole Greek people. One tribe of barbarians followed another, as long as any thing was left to plunder. The Huns, under Attila, laid waste the provinces to the south of the Danube for about five years, and were only induced to retreat, on receiving from the emperor six thousand pounds of gold, and the promise of an annual payment of two thousand.‡ The Ostrogoths, after obtaining an establishment to the south of the Danube, as allies of the empire, and receiving an annual subsidy from the Emperor Marcian to guard the frontiers, availed themselves of every pretext to plunder

\* A. D. 441. THEOPHANES, *Chron.* 87.

† A. D. 468. THEOPHANES, *Chron.* 99.

‡ A. D. 442 to 447.



Illyria, Macedonia, Thrace, and Thessaly. Their king, Theodoric, proved by far the most dangerous enemy that the eastern empire had yet encountered. Educated at the court of Constantinople as a hostage, he had availed himself of his ten years' residence, to study the languages, the politics, and the administration of the imperial government.\* Though he inherited an independent sovereignty over the Goths in Pannonia, he sought his fortune as a military adventurer in the Roman service, and acted as an ally, a mercenary, or an enemy, according as circumstances appeared to render the assumption of these different characters most conducive to his own aggrandizement.

It would throw little additional light on the state of the Greeks, to trace minutely the records of Theodoric's quarrels with the imperial court, or to narrate, in detail, the ravages committed by him, or by another Gothic mercenary of the same name, in all the provinces, from the shores of the Black Sea, to those of the Adriatic. These plundering expeditions were not finally terminated until Theodoric quitted the eastern empire to conquer Italy, and found the Ostrogothic monarchy, by which he obtained the title of the Great.†

It was certainly no imaginary feeling of respect which prevented Alaric, Genseric, Attila, and Theodoric, from attempting the conquest of Constantinople. If they had thought the task as easy

\* A. D. 461 to 471.

† A. D. 489. The depopulation of the empire was general, and Valens had been obliged to seize the monks of the monasteries, in order to raise the number of recruits required from Egypt. *Cod. Theodos.* xii. 1. 63.

as the subjugation of Rome, there can be no doubt, that the eastern empire would have been as fiercely assailed as the western, and new Rome would have shared the fate of the parent city. These warriors could only have been restrained by the great difficulties which the undertaking presented, and by the conviction, that they would meet with a far more determined resistance, on the part of the inhabitants, than the corrupt condition of the imperial court, and the disordered state of the public administration, appeared at first sight to promise. Their experience in civil and military affairs, revealed to them the existence of an inherent strength in the population of the Eastern empire, and a multiplicity of resources, which their attacks might call into action, but could not overcome. Casual encounters often shewed, that the people were neither destitute of courage nor military spirit, when circumstances favoured their display. Attila himself, the terror both of Goths and Romans — the scourge of God — was defeated before the town of Asemous, a frontier fortress of Illyria. Though he regarded its conquest as a matter of the greatest importance to his plans, and pushed the siege in person with unusual energy, the inhabitants baffled all his attempts, and set his power at defiance.\* Genseric was defeated by the inhabitants of the little town of Tænarus in Laconia.† Theodoric did not venture to attack Thessalonica, even at a time when the inhabitants, enraged at the neglect of the imperial government, drove out the

\* PRISCUS, p. 143, ed. Bonn.

† PROCOPIUS, *De Bello Vand.* i. 22.

officers of the emperor, overthrew his statues, and prepared to defend themselves against the barbarians, with their own unassisted resources.\* There is another remarkable example of the independent spirit of the Greek people, which saved their property from ruin in the case of Heraclea, a city of Macedonia. The inhabitants, in the moment of danger, placed their bishop at the head of the civil government, and intrusted him with power to treat with Theodoric, who, on observing their preparations for defence, felt satisfied, that it would be wiser to retire on receiving a supply of provisions for his army, than venture on plundering the country. Many other instances might be adduced to prove, that the forces of the northern barbarians were totally inadequate to overcome a determined resistance on the part of the Greek nation, and that their most powerful ally, within the Roman territories, was the vicious nature of the Roman government.

Theodoric succeeded, during the year 479, in surprising Epidamnus by treachery; and the alarm which this conquest caused at the court of Constantinople, shews, that the government was not blind to the importance of preventing any foreign power from acquiring a permanent dominion over a Greek city. The Emperor Zeno offered to cede to the Goths the extensive province of Dardania, which was, however, almost destitute of inhabitants, in order to induce Theodoric to quit Epidamnus. That city, the emperor declared, con-

\* MALCHUS, 255, ed. Bonn.

stituted a part of the well peopled provinces of the empire, and it was therefore in vain for Theodoric to expect that he could keep possession of it.\* This remarkable observation shews, that the desolation of the northern provinces was now beginning to compel the government of the Eastern empire, to regard the countries inhabited by the Greeks, which were still comparatively populous, as forming the national territory of the Roman empire.

Even before the Gothic invasions had depopulated and laid waste the Greek provinces, the general insecurity of property had rendered money rare in the agricultural districts. Valens having found it impossible to collect the tribute in specie, had rendered it payable in kind; and every subsequent emperor saw the wealth of his subjects decreased, and not only the country, but the cities, in many provinces, fallen into ruins.†

SECTION XI.—THE EMPERORS WHO REIGNED FROM THE DEATH OF ARCADIUS, TO THE ACCESSION OF JUSTINIAN, DISPLAYED A TENDENCY TO YIELD TO THE INFLUENCE OF PUBLIC OPINION.

FROM the death of Arcadius to the accession of Justinian, during a period of one hundred and twenty years,‡ the empire of the East was governed by six sovereigns of very different characters, and whose reigns have been generally viewed through the medium of religious prejudices; yet, in spite of

\* MALCHUS, 254, ed. Bonn.

; † *Cod. Theod.* xi. 2.

‡ A.D. 408 to 527.

the dissimilarity of their personal conduct, the general policy of their government is characterized by strong features of resemblance. The power of the emperor was never more unlimited; the administration of the empire, and of the imperial household, was regarded as a part of the sovereign's person, while the lives and fortunes of his subjects were considered as the property of the state, of which he was the master.\* But the absolute power of the emperor was now controlled by the danger of foreign invasions, which afforded to the dissatisfied the means of opposing the government, by the power of the orthodox clergy, who were strong in the support of a great part of the population, and by the fear of divisions in the church itself, which was now intimately connected with the state. The interest of the sovereign became thus identified with the sympathies of the majority of his subjects; yet the difficulty of deciding what part the emperor ought to take in the ecclesiastical disputes of the Arians and the orthodox, was so great as, at times, to give an appearance of doubt and indecision to the religious opinions of several emperors.

The rapid decline of the Roman power in the West, and the ruin of the European provinces of the Eastern empire, had created an eager desire to remedy, as far as possible, the disorders which had placed the empire on the brink of destruction. Most of the provinces of the West were inhabited by mixed races without union; the power of the military commanders was beyond the control of

\* *Cod. Theod.* ix. 14. 3. nam et ipsi pars corporis nostri sunt.

public opinion ; and neither the emperor, the senate, nor the higher clergy, were directly connected with the body of the people. In the East, the opinion of the people possessed some authority, and it was consequently studied and treated with deference. The importance of enforcing the most impartial administration of justice was so deeply felt by the government, that the emperors themselves attempted to restrict the application of their legislative power to individual and isolated cases. The Emperor Anastasius even ordered the judges to pay no attention to any private rescript, if it should be found contrary to the received laws of the empire, or to the public good ; and, in such cases, he commanded the judges to follow the established laws.\* The senate of Constantinople possessed great authority in controlling the general administration, and the dependent position of its members prevented that authority from being regarded with jealousy. The permanent existence of this body enabled it to establish fixed maxims of policy in the administration, and to render these maxims the grounds of the ordinary decisions of government. By this means, a systematic administration was firmly consolidated, and its steady and permanent regulations became a powerful check on the temporary and fluctuating views of the sovereign.

Theodosius the Second succeeded his father Arcadius at the age of eight ; and the forty-two years during which he governed the empire, he left the care of the public administration very much in the

\* *Cod. Just.* i. 22. 6.

hands of others. His education was chiefly directed by his sister Pulcheria, who seems, in all her actions, to have been guided by sentiments of patriotism as well as piety. Theodosius was naturally mild, humane, and devout. Though he possessed some manly personal accomplishments, his mind and character were deficient in strength. The arts were still regarded as a noble occupation, and Theodosius cultivated painting with such success, as to render it his most remarkable personal distinction; while his Greek subjects, mingling kindness with contempt, bestowed on him the name of Kalligraphos. His incapacity for business was so great, that he is hardly accused of having augmented the misfortunes of his reign, by his own personal acts. A spirit of reform, and a desire of improvement, had penetrated into the imperial administration; and his reign was distinguished by many internal changes for the better. Among these, the publication of the Theodosian code, and the establishment of the university of Constantinople, were the most important. The weakness of the emperor, by throwing the direction of public business into the hands of the senate and the ministers, laid the foundation of that systematic administration which characterises the government of his successors. He was the first of the emperors who was more a Greek than a Roman in his feelings and views; but his inactivity prevented his private character from exercising much influence on his public administration.

Marcian, a Thracian of humble birth, of no very elevated rank, and who had already attained the age of fifty-eight, was selected by Pulcheria to fill the

throne on the death of her brother.\* He received the rank of her husband merely to secure his title to the empire. She had taken monastic vows at an early age, though she continued to bear, during her brother's reign, a considerable part in the conduct of public business, having generally acted as his counsellor.† The conduct of Marcian, after he became emperor, justified Pulcheria's choice. He was a soldier who loved peace without fearing war. One of his first acts was, to refuse payment of the tribute which Attila had exacted from Theodosius. His reign lasted six years and a half, and was chiefly employed in restoring the resources of the empire, and alleviating its burdens. In the theological disputes which divided his subjects, Marcian attempted to act with impartiality; and he assembled the council of Chalcedon in the vain hope of establishing a system of ecclesiastical doctrine common to the whole empire. His attempt to identify the Christian church with the Roman empire only widened the separation of the different sects of Christians; and the opinions of the dissenters, while they were regarded as heretical, began to be adopted as national. The Eutychian heresy became the religion of Egypt; Nestorianism was that of Mesopotamia. In such a state of things Marcian sought to temporize.

Leo the Elder, another Thracian, was elected emperor, on the death of Marcian, by the influence

\* Marcian had been taken prisoner by Genseric when he accompanied Aspar with an army to support Boniface.—PROCOPIUS, *de Bello Vand.* lib. i.

† It is singular to find hereditary rights and celibacy growing up together. During the fifth century, it was by no means unusual to take vows, and continue to bear an active part in public business.



of Aspar, a general of barbarian descent, who had acquired an authority similar to that which Stilicho and Ætius had possessed in the West. Aspar being a foreigner and an Arian, durst not himself, notwithstanding his influence and favour with the army, aspire to the imperial throne; a fact which proves that the political constitution of the government, and the fear of public opinion, exercised some control over the despotic power of the court at Constantinople. The insolence of Aspar and his family determined Leo to diminish the authority of the barbarian leaders in the imperial service; and he adopted measures for recruiting the army from his native subjects. The system of his predecessors had been, to form the best troops entirely from foreign mercenaries; and the character of the native recruits had fallen into such contempt, that they were ranked in the legislation of the empire as an inferior class of military.\* Leo saw no mode of reforming the army, without removing Aspar; and, despairing of success by any other means, he employed assassination; thus casting, by the murder of his benefactor, so deep a stain on his own character, as to have acquired the surname of the Butcher. During his reign, the arms of the empire were generally unsuccessful; and his great naval expedition against Genseric, the most powerful which the Romans had ever prepared, was completely defeated. As it was dangerous to confide so mighty a force to any general of talent, Basilicus, the brother of the empress, was intrusted with the chief command. His incapacity assisted the Vandals

\* *Cod. Theodos.*

in defeating the expedition quite as much as the prudence and talents of Genseric. The Ostrogoths, in the meantime, extended their ravages from the Danube as far as Thessaly. There appeared also some probability, that they would succeed in establishing a permanent kingdom in Illyria and Macedonia, completely independent of the imperial power. The civil administration of Leo was conducted with great prudence. He followed in the steps of his predecessor in all his attempts to lighten the burdens of his subjects, and to improve their condition. When Antioch suffered severely from an earthquake, he remitted the public taxes to the amount of one thousand pounds of gold, and granted freedom from all imposts, to those who rebuilt their ruined houses. In the disputes which still divided the church, he adopted the orthodox, or Greek party, in opposition to the Eutychians and Nestorians. The epithet of Great has been bestowed on him by the Greeks — a title, it should seem, conferred upon him rather with reference to his being the first of his name, and on account of his orthodoxy, than from the pre-eminence of his personal actions. He died at the age of sixty-three, and was succeeded by his grandson, Leo the Second, an infant, who survived his elevation only a few months.

Zeno mounted the throne on the death of his son, Leo the Second; for no regular monarchical succession was admitted by the Romans. He was an Isaurian, whom Leo the Great had selected as the husband of his daughter Ariadne, when he was engaged in rousing the military spirit of his own subjects against the barbarian mercenaries. In the

eyes of the Greeks, the Isaurians were little better than barbarians; but their valour had obtained for them a high reputation among the troops in the capital. The origin of Zeno rendered him unpopular with the Greeks; and as he did not participate in their nationality in religion, any more than in descent, he was accused of cherishing heretical opinions. He appears to have been unsteady in his views, and vicious in his conduct; yet the difficulties of his position were so great, and the prejudices against him so strong, that in spite of all the misfortunes of his reign, the fact of his having maintained the integrity of the eastern empire, attests, that he could not have been totally deficient in courage and talent; while it warrants the inference, that the official aristocracy exercised a powerful control over the regular administration. About the commencement of his reign, he witnessed the final extinction of the western empire, and, for many years, the Theodorics threatened him with the loss of the greater part of the European provinces of the eastern. The imperial government, however, even at this crisis, easily maintained its superiority over every single enemy, and commanded respect from all. When it is remembered, therefore, that Zeno was an Isaurian, and a peacemaker in theological quarrels, it will not be surprising, that the Greeks, who honestly regarded him as a heterodox barbarian, should have heaped many calumnies on his memory. His presumption did not go so far as to propose to the senate the adoption of his brother as his successor. The times were difficult; his brother was more worthless than himself; and the support

of the official aristocracy was necessary. The disposal of the imperial crown was again placed in the hands of Ariadne.

Anastasius secured his election by his marriage with Ariadne. He was a native of Epidamnus, and sixty years of age when he ascended the throne. During his reign, he had to encounter some serious seditions, as the empire was involved in wars with the Persians, Bulgarians, and Goths. Anastasius was more afraid of rebellions and seditions, than of defeat; and he sub-divided the command of his troops in such a way, that success in the field of battle was almost impossible. In one important campaign against Persia, the intendant-general was the officer of highest rank in an army of fifty thousand men. Due military subordination, and vigorous measures, under such an arrangement, were impossible; and it reflects some credit on the organization of the Roman troops, that they were enabled to keep the field without total ruin.

Anastasius devoted his most anxious care to alleviate the misfortunes of his subjects, and to diminish the taxes which oppressed them. He constructed the great wall, to secure from destruction the rich villages and towns in the vicinity of Constantinople, when the barbarians invaded the empire. This wall extended from the Sea of Marmora, near Selymbria, to the Black Sea, forming an arc of about forty-two miles, at a distance of twenty-eight miles from the capital. The rarest virtue of a sovereign is the sacrifice of his own revenues, and, consequently, the diminution of his own power, to

increase the happiness of his people. The greatest action of Anastasius was the voluntary diminution of the revenues of the states. He abolished the *chrysargyron*, the most lucrative but oppressive tax in the empire, which affected the industry of every subject. The increased prosperity which this concession infused into society, soon displayed its effects; and the brilliant exploits of the reign of Justinian, must be traced back to the reinvigoration of the body politic of the Roman empire by Anastasius. He expended large sums in repairing the damages caused by war and earthquakes; yet, so exact was his economy, and so great were the revenues of the eastern empire, that he was enabled to accumulate, during his reign, three hundred and twenty thousand pounds of gold in the public treasury.\* The people had prayed at his accession, that he might reign as he had lived; and even in the eyes of the Greeks, he would, probably, have been regarded as the model of a perfect monarch, had he not shewn a disposition to favour heresy. Misled, either by his wish to comprehend all sects in the established church,—as all nations were included in the empire,—or by a too decided attachment to the doctrines of the Eutychians, he excited the opposition of the orthodox party; while their domineering spirit troubled his internal administration by several dangerous seditions, and induced the Greeks to overlook his humane and benevolent policy. He reigned more than twenty-seven years.

Justin, the successor of Anastasius, had the merit

\* L.13,000,000. PROCOPIUS, *Hist. Arc.* 19. GIBBON, vii. 109.

of being strictly orthodox. His reign tended to unite more closely the church with the imperial authority, and to render the opposition of the heterodox more national, in the various provinces where a national clergy and a national language existed. Justin was a Thracian soldier of fortune, without education, but a man of experience and talents, who, at the age of sixty-eight, obtained the imperial crown for himself, while employed to secure it for another. In his civil government, he imitated the wise and economical policy of his predecessor, and his military experience enabled him to improve the condition of the army. He furnished large sums to alleviate the misery caused by a terrible earthquake at Antioch, and paid great attention to the repairing of the public buildings throughout the empire. His reign lasted nine years.

It must be observed, that the five emperors, of whose character and policy the preceding sketch has been drawn, were men born in the middling or lower ranks of society; and all of them, with the exception of Zeno, had witnessed, as private individuals, the ravages of the barbarians in their native provinces, and suffered personally from the weak and disorganized state of the empire. They had all ascended the throne at a mature age, and these coincidences tended to imprint on their councils that uniformity of policy, which is a marked feature in their history. They had all more of the feelings of subjects of the empire, than of the dominant class, and were, consequently, more Greeks than Romans. They appear to have participated in public feeling, to a degree natural only to men who

had long lived without courtly honours, and rare, indeed, even among those of the greatest genius, who are born or educated near the steps of a throne. That some part of the merit of these sovereigns was commonly ascribed to the experience which they had gained by a long life, is evident from the reply which, it is said, the Emperor Justin gave to the senators, who wished him to raise Justinian, at the age of forty, to the dignity of Augustus; "Pray God," said the prudent monarch, "that a young man may never wear the imperial robes."

During this eventful period, the western empire crumbled into ruins, while the eastern was saved, in consequence of these emperors having organized the system of administration, which has been most unjustly calumniated, under the name of Byzantine. The highest officers, and the proudest military commanders, were rendered completely dependent on ministerial departments, and were no longer able to conspire or rebel with impunity. The sovereign was no longer exposed to personal danger, nor the treasury to open peculation. But unfortunately, the central executive power could not protect the people from fraud, with the same ease as the treasury; and the emperors never perceived the necessity of intrusting the people with the power of defending themselves from the financial oppression of the subaltern administration.

The principles of political science and civil liberty were, indeed, very little understood by the people of the Roman empire. The legislative, executive, and administrative powers of government were confounded, as well as concentrated, in the person

of the sovereign. The emperor represented the sovereignty of Rome, which, even after the establishment of Christianity, was considered as something superhuman, if not precisely a divine institution. But, so ill can despotism balance the various powers of the state, and so incapable is it of studying the condition of the governed, that even under the best emperors, seditions and rebellions were not rare. They constituted the only means whereby the people could make their petitions heard; and the moment the populace ceased to be overawed by military force, every trifling discontent might, from accident, break out into a rebellion. The continual abuse, to which arbitrary power is liable, was felt by the emperors; and several of them attempted to restrain its exercise, in order that the general principles of legislation might not be violated by the imperial ordinances. Such laws express the sentiments of justice which animate the administration, but they are always useless; for no law can be of any avail, unless a right to enforce its observance exist in some tribunal, independent of the legislative and executive powers of the state, and the very existence of such a tribunal implies, that the state possesses a constitution which renders the law more powerful than the prince. Much, however, as many of the Roman emperors may have loved justice, no one was ever found who felt inclined to diminish his own authority so far, as to render the law permanently superior to his own will. A strong impulse towards improvement was felt throughout the empire; and had not the



middling and upper classes of society been already so far reduced in number, as to make their influence almost nugatory in the scale of civilization, there might have been some hope of the political regeneration of the Roman state. Patriotism and political honesty can, however, only become national virtues, when the people possess some control over the conduct of their rulers, and when the rulers themselves publicly announce their political principles, and act on them in private life.

Erroneous views, also, of political economy, led many of the emperors to increase much of the evil which they were endeavouring to remedy.\* Had the Emperor Anastasius left the three hundred and twenty thousand pounds of gold, which he had accumulated in the treasury, circulating among his subjects, or had he employed it in works extending the industry of his people, and adding to the security of their property, it is probable, that his reign would have very greatly augmented the population of the empire, and pressed back the barbarians on their own thinly peopled lands. If it had been in his power to have added to this boon some guarantee against arbitrary impositions on the part of his successors, and against unjust exactions on the part of the local administration, there can be no doubt, that his reign would have laid the foundations of a flourishing kingdom; and that, instead of giving a false brilliancy to the reign of Justinian, he would

\* Julian caused a famine at Antioch, by fixing the price at which provisions were to be sold, and distributing four hundred thousand bushels of grain without judgment, as appears from his own account in the *Misopogon*.

have increased the happiness of the most civilized portion of mankind, and arrested the decline of the eastern empire.

SECTION XII. — STATE OF CIVILIZATION, AND INFLUENCE OF NATIONAL FEELINGS, AMONG THE GREEK POPULATION.

THE ravages of the Goths and Huns in Europe and Asia, had effected a great change in the state of society in the eastern empire, even though their efforts at conquest had been successfully repulsed. In many provinces, the higher classes had been completely exterminated. The loss of their slaves and serfs, who had been carried away by the invaders; had either reduced them to the condition of humble cultivators, or they had emigrated, and abandoned their land to the labourers, from being unable to obtain any revenue in the miserable state of cultivation, to which the capture of the stock, the destruction of the agricultural buildings, and the want of a market, had reduced the country. In many of the towns, the diminished population was reduced to misery, by the ruin of the districts in the neighbourhood. The higher classes disappeared under the weight of the municipal duties which they were called upon to perform. Houses remained unlet; and even when let, the portion of rent which was not absorbed by the imperial taxes, was insufficient to supply the demands of the local expenditure. The labourer and the artizan alone could find bread; the walls of cities were allowed to fall into ruins; the

streets were neglected ; public buildings had become useless ; aqueducts remained unrepaired ; internal communications ceased ; and, with the extinction of the wealthy and educated classes, the local prejudices of the lower orders became the law of society.

In the provinces, the clergy alone were enabled to maintain a position, by which they could devote some time to study. They accordingly became the sole depositaries of knowledge, and as their connection with the people was of the most intimate and friendly character, they employed the popular language to instruct their flocks, to preserve their attachment, and rouse their enthusiasm. In this way, ecclesiastical literature grew up in every province which possessed its own language and national character. The Scriptures were translated into every language, and in each country they were read and expounded to the people in their native dialect, in Armenian, in Syriac, in Coptic, and in Gothic, as well as in Latin and Greek. It was this connection between the Greek people and their clergy, which enabled the church, in the eastern empire, to preserve a national character, in spite of the exertions of the emperors and the popes to give it a Roman or imperial organization. Christianity, as a religion, was always universal in its character, but the Christian church long carried with it many national distinctions. The earliest church had been Jewish in its forms and opinions, and in the East, it long retained a tincture of the oriental philosophy of its Alexandrine proselytes. After Christianity became the established religion of the empire, a struggle arose between the Latin and Greek clergy for

supremacy in the church. The greater learning, and the more popular character of the Greek clergy, supported by the superior knowledge, and higher political importance, of the laity in the East, soon gave to the Greeks a predominant influence in the established church. But this influence was still subordinate to the authority of the Bishop of Rome, who arrogated the rank of a spiritual emperor, and whose claims to represent the supremacy of Rome were admitted, though not without jealousy, by the Greeks. The authority of the Bishop of Rome, and of the Latin element in the established church, as the ally of the power of the Roman emperor, was so great in the reign of Marcian, that the legate of Pope Leo the Great, at the general council of Chalcedon, though a Greek bishop, made use of the Latin language, when addressing an audience composed entirely of eastern bishops, and for whom his discourse required to be translated into Greek. It was inconsistent with the dignity of the Roman pontiff to use any language but that of Rome, though doubtless Saint Peter had made use of Greek, except when speaking with the gift of tongues. Latin, however, was the official language of the empire; and the Emperor Marcian, in addressing the same council of the church, spoke that language, though he knew that Greek alone could be intelligible to the greater number of the bishops whom he addressed. It was fortunate for the Greeks, perhaps also for the whole Christian world, that the popes did not, at this time, lay claim to the gift of tongues, and address every nation in its own language. If it had occurred to them that the head of the universal church ought

to speak all languages, the bishops of Rome might perhaps have rendered themselves the political sovereigns of the Christian world.

The attempt of the popes to introduce the Latin language into the East, roused the opposition of all the Greeks. The constitution of the eastern church still admitted the laity to a share in the election of their bishops, and obliged the members of the ecclesiastical profession to cultivate the good-will of their flocks. In the East, the language of the people was the language of religion, and of ecclesiastical literature, consequently the cause of the Greek clergy and people was united. This connection with the people, gave a weight and authority to the Greek clergy, who formed the most learned and numerous body in the Christian church, which proved extremely useful in checking the civil tyranny of the emperors, and the religious despotism of the popes.

Though the state still maintained its supremacy over the clergy, and the emperor, as head of the state, regarded and treated the popes and patriarchs as his ministers, still the church, as a body, had already rendered itself superior to the person of the emperor, and had established the principle, that the orthodoxy of the emperor was a law of the empire.\* The patriarch of Constantinople, suspecting the Emperor Anastasius of attachment to the Eutychian heresy, refused to crown him until he had given a written declaration of his orthodoxy.†

\* The Theodosian code, and particularly the sixteenth book, proves the supremacy of the civil power.

† Eutyches taught, that in Christ there was but one nature, namely, that of the word, who became incarnate. — MOSHEIM'S *Ecclesiastical History*,

Yet the ceremony of the emperor's receiving the imperial crown from the patriarch, was introduced, for the first time only, on the accession of Leo the Great, sixty-six years before the election of Anastasius.\* It is true, that the church was not always able to enforce the observance of the principle, that the empire of the East could only be governed by an orthodox sovereign. The aristocracy, and the army in the East, proved, at times, stronger than the Greek clergy.

The state of literature and the fine arts always affords a correct representation of the condition of society among the Greeks, though the fine arts, during the existence of the Roman empire, were more closely connected with the government and the aristocracy, than with popular feelings. The assertion, that Christianity tended to accelerate the decline of the Roman empire, has been already refuted; but although the eastern empire received immeasurable benefits from Christianity, both politically and socially, still the literature and the fine arts of Greece received from it a mortal blow. The Christians soon declared themselves the enemies of all pagan literature. Homer, and the Attic tragedians, were prohibited books; and the fine arts were proscribed, if not persecuted. Many of the early fathers held opinions which were not ungenial with the fierce contempt for letters entertained by the first Mahometans. It is true, that this anti-pagan spirit might have proved temporary, had it

translated by James Murdock, D.D. Newhaven, U. S. 1832. 3 vols. This excellent translation contains many valuable notes.

\* GIBBON, vi. 192.

not occurred at a period when the decline of society had begun to render knowledge rarer, and learning of more difficult attainment than formerly.

Theodosius the Younger found the empire in danger of not procuring a regular supply of well educated aspirants to civil offices ; and, in order to preserve the state from such a misfortune, he established a university at Constantinople, which was maintained at the public expense. The composition of this university demonstrates the important political position occupied by the Greek nation,—fifteen professors were appointed to teach Greek, grammar, and literature ; thirteen were named to instruct in Latin ; two professors of law were added, and one of philosophy. Such was the imperial university of Theodosius, who did every thing in his power to render the rank of professor highly honourable. The candidate, who aspired to a chair in the university, was obliged to undergo an examination before the senate, and it was necessary for him to possess an irreproachable moral character, as also to prove that his learning was profound. The term of twenty years' service secured for the professors the title of count, and placed them among the nobility of the empire. Learning, it is evident, was still honoured and cultivated by a few in the East ; but the attention of the great body of society was directed to religious controversy, and the greatest talents were devoted to these contests, which assumed already a political and national character. The few philosophers who kept aloof from the disputes of the Christian church, plunged into a mysticism more injurious to the human intellect,

and less likely to be of any use to society, than the most furious controversy. Most of these speculators in metaphysical science, abandoned all interest in the fate of their country, and in the affairs of this world, from an idle hope of being able to establish a personal intercourse with an imaginary world of spirits. With the exception of religious writings, and historical works, there was very little in the literature of this period which could be called popular. The people amused themselves with chariot races, instead of the drama; and, among the higher orders, music had long taken the place of poetry.

The same genius which inspires poetry, is necessary to excellence in the fine arts; yet, as these are more mechanical in their execution, good taste may be long retained, after inspiration has entirely ceased, by the mere effect of imitating good models. The very constitution of society seemed to forbid the existence of genius. In order to produce the highest degree of excellence in works of literature and art, it seems absolutely necessary that the author and the public should participate in some common feelings of admiration for simplicity, beauty, and sublimity. When the condition of society places the patron of works of genius in a totally different rank of life from their authors, and renders the criticisms of a small and exclusive circle of individuals the law in literature and art, then an artificial taste must be studied, in order to secure the applause of those who alone possess the means of rewarding the merit of which they approve. The very fact that this taste, which the author or the artist is called upon to



gratify, is to him more a task of artificial study than a creation of natural feeling, must, of itself, produce a tendency to exaggeration or mannerism. There is nothing in the range of human affairs so completely democratic as taste. Demosthenes spoke to the crowd; Phidias worked for the people.

Christianity engaged in direct war with the arts. The Greeks had united painting, sculpture, and architecture, in such a way, that their temples formed a harmonious illustration of the beauties of the fine arts. The finest temples were museums of paganism, and, consequently, Christianity repudiated all connection with this class of buildings until it had disfigured and degraded them. The courts of judicature, the basilics, not the temples, were chosen as the models of Christian churches, and the adoption of the ideal beauty of ancient sculpture was treated with contempt. The earlier Fathers of the church wished to represent our Saviour as unlike the types of the pagan divinities as possible.\*

Works of art gradually lost their value as creations of the mind; and their destruction commenced, whenever the material of which they were composed was of great value, or happened to be wanted for some other purpose more useful in the opinion of the possessor. The Theodosian Code contains many laws against the destruction of works of ancient art and the plundering of tombs.† The Christian religion, when it deprived the temples and the statues of a religious sanction, permitted the avaricious to destroy them in order to appropriate the materials; and,

\* MILLMAN's *History of Christianity*, ii. 353. Paris ed.

† *Cod. Theodos.* ix. tit. 17.

when all reverence for antiquity was effaced, it became a profitable, though disgraceful occupation, to ransack the pagan tombs for the ornaments which they contained. The clergy of the new religion demanded the construction of new churches; and the desecrated buildings, falling into ruins, supplied materials more easily than the quarries.

Many of the celebrated works of art, which had been transported to Constantinople at its foundation, were destroyed in the numerous conflagrations to which that city was always liable. The celebrated statues of the Muses perished in the time of Arcadius. The fashion of erecting statues had not become obsolete, though statuary and sculpture had sunk in the general decline of taste; and the vanity of the ambitious was more gratified by the costliness of the material, than by the beauty of the workmanship. A silver statue of the Empress Eudocia, placed on a column of porphyry, excited so greatly the indignation of John Chrysostom, that he indulged in the most violent invectives against the empress. His virulence compelled the government to exile him from the patriarchal chair. Many valuable Grecian works of bronze were melted down, in order to form a colossal statue of the Emperor Anastasius, which was placed on a lofty column to adorn the capital.\* Others of gold and silver may have augmented the

\* Zeno erected an equestrian statue of his ally, Theodoric, in the palace.—JORNANDES, *De Reb. Get.* 57. The senate of Rome erected a golden statue of Theodoric.—ISIDOR. *Chron. Ær.* 549. Procopius describes a rude Mosaic statue representing Theodoric, which soon began to fall to pieces, and was considered by the people as an emblem of the Ostrogothic monarchy. Was this not probably a Gothic imitation of a chryselephantine statue?—PROCOR. *De Bell. Goth.* i. 24.

sums which he laid up in the public treasury. Still it is unquestionable, that a taste for painting had not entirely ceased among the educated and wealthy classes. Mosaics and engraved gems were fashionable luxuries; but the numbers of the patrons of art had decreased in the general poverty, and the prejudices of the Christians had greatly restricted its range.

## CHAPTER III.

### CONDITION OF THE GREEKS UNDER THE REIGN OF JUSTINIAN.

INFLUENCE OF THE IMPERIAL POWER ON THE CONDITION OF THE GREEK NATION DURING THE REIGN OF JUSTINIAN — MILITARY FORCES OF THE EMPIRE — INFLUENCE OF JUSTINIAN'S LEGISLATION ON THE GREEK POPULATION OF THE EMPIRE — INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION, AS IT AFFECTED THE GREEK NATION — INFLUENCE OF JUSTINIAN'S CONQUESTS ON THE GREEK POPULATION, AND THE CHANGE EFFECTED BY THE CONQUEST OF THE VANDAL KINGDOM OF AFRICA — CAUSES OF THE EASY CONQUEST OF THE OSTROGOTHIC KINGDOM OF ITALY BY BELISARIVS, AND OF THE CONQUESTS IN SPAIN — RELATIONS OF THE NORTHERN NATIONS WITH THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND THE GREEK NATION — RELATIONS WITH PERSIA — TRADE AND COMMERCIAL POSITION OF THE GREEKS, AND COMPARATIVE CONDITION WITH THE OTHER NATIONS LIVING UNDER THE ROMAN GOVERNMENT — INFLUENCE OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN SUPPORTING THE NATIONAL FEELINGS OF THE GREEKS.

#### SECTION I. — INFLUENCE OF THE IMPERIAL POWER ON THE CONDITION OF THE GREEK NATION DURING THE REIGN OF JUSTINIAN.

It happens not unfrequently, that, during long periods of time, national feelings and popular institutions escape the attention of historians; their feeble traces are lost in the importance of events, apparently the effect of accident, destiny, or the special intervention of Providence. In such cases, history becomes a chronicle of facts, or a series of

biographical sketches; and it ceases to yield the instructive lessons which it always affords, as long as it connects events with local habits, national customs, and the general ideas of a people. The history of the eastern empire often assumes this form, and is frequently little better than a mere chronicle. Its historians hardly display national character or popular feeling, and only participate in the superstition and party spirit of their situation in society. In spite of the brilliant events, which have given the reign of Justinian a prominent place in the annals of mankind, it is presented to us in a series of isolated and incongruous facts. Its chief interest is derived from the biographical memorials of Belisarius, Theodora, and Justinian; and its most instructive lesson has been drawn from the influence which its legislation has exercised on foreign nations. The unerring instinct of mankind has, however, fixed on this period as one of the greatest eras in man's annals. The actors may have been men of ordinary merit, but the events, of which they were the agents, effected the mightiest revolutions in society. The frame of the ancient world was broken to pieces, and men long looked back with wonder and admiration at the fragments which remained, to prove the existence of a nobler race than their own. The eastern empire, though too powerful to fear any external enemy, was withering away from the rapidity with which the state devoured the resources of the people; and this malady or corruption of the Roman government, appeared to the wisest men of the age, so utterly incurable, that it was supposed to indicate the approaching dissolution of the globe. No dawn of a

new social organization had yet manifested its advent, in any part of the known world. A large portion, perhaps the majority of the human race, continued to live in a state of slavery; and slaves were still regarded as intelligent domestic animals, not as men.\* Society was, however, to be regenerated by the destruction of slavery; but, to destroy slavery, the free inhabitants of the civilized world were compelled to descend to the state of poverty and ignorance, in which they had, for ages, kept the servile population. The field for general improvement could only be opened, and the reorganization of society could only commence, when universal principles of philanthropy were called into action.

The reign of Justinian is more remarkable as a portion of the history of mankind, than as a chapter in the annals of the Roman empire, or of the Greek nation. The changes of centuries passed in rapid succession before the eyes of one generation. The life of Belisarius, either in its reality, or its romantic form, has typified his age. In his early youth, the world was populous and wealthy, the empire rich and powerful. He conquered extensive realms, and mighty nations, and led kings captive to the footstool of Justinian, the lawgiver of civilization. Old age arrived; Belisarius sank into the grave suspected and impoverished by his feeble and ungrateful master; and the world, from the banks of the Euphrates to those of the Tagus, presented the awful spectacle of famine, plague, and ruined cities, and of nations on the brink of extermination. The impres-

\* *Oh demens, ita servus homo est!*

*JUVENAL, Sat. vi. 221.*

sion on the hearts of men was profound. Fragments of Gothic poetry, legends of Persian literature, and the fate of Belisarius himself, still indicate the eager attention with which this period was long regarded.

The expectation that Justinian would be able to re-establish the Roman power, was entertained by many, and not without reasonable grounds, at the time of his accession to the throne; but, before his death, the delusion was utterly dissipated. Anastasius, by filling the treasury, and remodelling the army, had prepared the way for reforming the financial administration, and improving the condition of the people. Justinian unfortunately employed the immense wealth and effective army to which he succeeded, in such a manner, as to increase the burden of the imperial government, and render hopeless the future reform of the system. Yet, it must still be observed, that the decay of the internal resources of the empire, which proceeded with so fearful rapidity in the latter days of Justinian's reign, was interwoven with the frame of society. For six centuries, the Roman government had ruled the East in a state of tranquillity, when compared with the ordinary fortunes of the human race; and during this long period, the people had been moulded into slaves of the imperial treasury. Justinian, by introducing measures of reform, tending to augment the powers and revenues of the state, only accelerated the inevitable catastrophe prepared by centuries of fiscal oppression.

It is impossible to form a correct idea of the position of the Greek population in the East, without taking a general, though cursory view, of the

nature of the Roman administration, and observing the effect which it produced on the whole population of the empire. The contrast presented by the increasing endeavours of the government to centralize every branch of the administration, and the additional strength which local feelings were gaining in the distant provinces, is a singular, though natural consequence, of the wants of the sovereign, and the poverty of the people. The civil organization of the empire had attained its highest degree of perfection in the reign of Justinian; the imperial power had secured a practical supremacy over the military officers and the benefited clergy, and placed them under the control of the civil departments of the state; the absolute authority of the emperor was fully established, and systematically exercised, in the army, the church, and the state. A century of prudent administration had infused new vigour into the government, and Justinian succeeded to the means of rendering himself one of the greatest conquerors in the annals of the Roman empire. The change which time had effected in the position of the emperors, from the reign of Constantine to that of Justinian, was by no means inconsiderable. Two hundred years, in any government, must prove productive of great vicissitudes.

It is true, that in theory, the power of the military emperor was as great as that of the civil monarch; and, according to the phrases in fashion with their contemporaries, both Constantine and Justinian were constitutional sovereigns, equally restrained, in the exercise of their power, by the laws



and usages of the Roman empire.\* But there is an essential difference between the position of a general and a king; and all the Roman emperors, until the accession of Arcadius, had been generals. The leader of an army must always, to a certain extent, be the comrade of his soldiers; he must often participate in their feelings, and make their interests and views coincide with his own. This community of sentiment generally creates so close a connection, that the wishes of the troops exercise great influence over the conduct of their leader, and temper to them, at least, the arbitrary employment of despotic power, by confining it within the usages of military discipline, and the habits of military life. When the civil supremacy of the Roman emperors became firmly established, by the changes which were introduced into the imperial armies, after the time of Theodosius the Great, the emperor ceased to be personally connected with the army, and considered himself quite as much the master of the soldiers whom he payed, as of the subjects whom he taxed. The sovereign had no longer any notion of public opinion beyond its existence in the church, and its display in the factions of the court, or the amphitheatre. The immediate effects of absolute power were not, however, fully revealed in the details of the administration, until the reign of Justinian. Various circumstances have been noticed in the preceding

\* *Sub libertate Romana* was the expression which marked the regularity of the imperial administration, based on rules of procedure and law, as opposed to an arbitrary despotism.

chapter, which tended to connect the policy of several of the emperors, who reigned during the fifth century, with the interests of their subjects. Justinian found order introduced into every branch of the public administration, immense wealth accumulated in the imperial treasury, discipline re-established in the army, and the church eager to support an orthodox emperor. Unfortunately for mankind, this increase in the power of the emperor rendered him independent of the good will of his subjects, whose interests seemed to him subordinate to the exigencies of the public administration; and his reign proved one of the most injurious, in the history of the Roman empire, to the moral and political condition of its subjects. In forming an opinion concerning the events of Justinian's reign, it must be borne in mind, that the foundation of its power and glory was laid by Anastasius, while Justinian sowed the seeds of the misfortunes of Maurice; and, by persecuting the very nationality of his heterodox subjects, prepared the way for the conquests of the Mussulmans.

Justinian mounted the throne with the feelings, and in the position, of a hereditary sovereign, prepared, however, by every advantage of circumstance, to hold out the expectation of a wise and prudent reign. Born and educated in a private station, he had attained the mature age of forty-five before he ascended the throne.\* He had received

\* It would answer no purpose to crowd the pages of this little work with references to Procopius. The statements in the *Anecdotes*, the *Edifices*, and the *Histories*, are too dissimilar to be cited together without explanations. Procopius seems a valuable authority even in his *Anecdotes*. He shews himself equally credulous in his *Histories*. *Audiat et altera pars*. Justinian

an excellent education. He was a man of honourable intentions, and of a laborious disposition, attentive to business, and well versed in law and theology; but his abilities were moderate, his judgment was feeble, and he was deficient in decision of character. Simple in his own habits, he, nevertheless, added to the pomp and ceremonial of the imperial court, and strove to make the isolation of the emperor, as a superior being, visible in the public pageantry of government. Though ambitious of glory, he was infinitely more attentive to the exhibition of his power, than to the adoption of measures for securing the essentials of national strength.

The eastern empire was an absolute monarchy, of a regular and systematic form. The emperor was the head of the government, and the master of all those engaged in the public service; but the administration was an immense establishment, artfully and scientifically constructed in its details.\* The numerous individuals employed in each ministerial department of the state, consisted of a body of men appropriated to that special service, which they were compelled to study attentively, to which they devoted their lives, and in which they were sure to rise, by talents and industry. Each department of the state formed a separate profession, as completely

appears to have been descended from a Slavonic family. His father's name was Istok, of which Sabbatios is a translation. His mother and sister were named Wiglenitza. His own native name was Uprawda, corresponding to *ius, justitia*. THEOPHILUS, *In vita Justiniani*. *Foreign Quarterly Review*, No. 51. *Slavonian Antiquities*.

\* No correct idea of the Roman administration can be formed, without consulting the *Notitia dignitatum et administrationum*, in the excellent edition of Dr Boecking, Bonnæ, 1839, &c.

distinct, and as perfectly organized in its internal arrangements, as the legal profession is in modern Europe. A Roman emperor would no more have thought of suddenly creating a financier, or an administrator, than a modern sovereign would think of making a lawyer. This circumstance explains, at once, how education and official knowledge were so well preserved in the Roman administration, where, as in the law and the church, they flourished long after the extinction of literary acquirements in any other classes of the people;\* and it affords also an explanation of the singular duration of the Roman government, and of its inherent principle of vitality. If it wanted the energy necessary for its own regeneration, which could only have proceeded from the influence of a free people on the sovereign power, it, at least, escaped the evils of official anarchy, and vacillating government. Nothing but this systematic composition of the multifarious branches of the Roman administration, could have preserved the empire from dissolution, during the period in which it was a prey to internal wars and foreign invasions; and this supremacy of the system over the will of individuals, gave a character of immutability to administrative procedure, which warranted the boast of the subjects of Constantine and Justinian, that they lived under the protection of the Roman constitution. The greatest imperfection of the government arose from the total want

\* The law of Valentinian, forbidding students to remain in Rome after the one and twentieth year of their age, shews that restrictions were put on education. The law was apparently enacted to prevent the landed proprietors in the provinces, from escaping the payment of the land-tax.

of any popular control over the moral conduct of the public servants. Political morality, like pure taste, cannot live without the atmosphere of public opinion.\*

The state of society, in the eastern empire, underwent far greater changes under the Roman government, than the imperial administration. The race of wealthy nobles, whose princely fortunes and independent bearing had excited the fears and the avarice of the early Cæsars, had been long extinct. The imperial court and household now included all the higher classes in the capital. The people had no position in the state, but that of tax-payers. While the officers of the civil, finance, and judicial departments, the clergy, and the military, were the servants of the emperor, the people, the Roman people, were his slaves.† No connecting link of common interest, or national sympathy, united the various classes as one people, and connected them with the emperor. The only bond of union was one of universal oppression; as every thing in the imperial government had become subordinate to the necessity of supplying the treasury with money. The fiscal severity of the Roman government had, for centuries, been gradually absorbing all the

\* When we blame the evils of the Roman government, we ought not to overlook the inconveniences which would result in a declining state of society, from the neglect of general interests in large representative assemblies, intent on temporary expedients, and incapable, at such a period, of attending to any thing but local claims. A comparison of the administrative systems of Rome, Prussia, and the United States of America, might be rendered a work of great practical use to statesmen.

† The Roman people now consisted chiefly of Greeks; but Latin seems to have been spoken in Illyricum and Thrace by a very numerous portion of the population.

accumulated wealth of society, as the possession of large fortunes was almost sure to entail their confiscation. Even if the wealth of the higher classes in the provinces escaped this fate, it was, by the constitution of the empire, rendered responsible for the deficiencies which might occur in the taxes of the districts from which it was obtained; and thus the rich were every where rapidly sinking to the level of the general poverty. The destruction of the higher classes of society had swept away all the independent landed proprietors, before Justinian commenced his series of reforms in the provinces.

The effect of these reforms extended to future times, and exercised an important influence on the internal composition of the Greek people. In ancient times, a very large portion of society consisted of slaves or serfs. They formed the great body of the rural population; and as they received no moral training, they were inferior, in every mental quality, to the barbarians of the north; but, from this very cause, they were utterly incapable of making any exertion to improve their condition, and whether the province which they inhabited belonged to the Romans or Greeks, the Goths or the Huns, they remained equally slaves. The oppressive system of the Roman financial administration, by depressing the higher classes, and impoverishing the rich, found the lower order at last burdened with the great part of the land-tax. The labourer of the soil became an object of great interest to the treasury, and, as the chief instrument in furnishing the financial resources of the state, obtained almost as important a position, in the eyes of the fisc, as the

landed proprietor himself. The first laws which conferred any rights on the slave, are those which the Roman government enacted, to prevent the landed proprietors from transferring their slaves engaged in the cultivation of lands, assessed for the land-tax, to other employments, which, though more profitable to the proprietor of the slave, would have yielded a smaller, or less permanent return to the imperial treasury.\* The avarice of the imperial treasury, by reducing the mass of the free population to the same degree of poverty as the slaves, had removed some of the practical inferiority which had separated the two classes; but the position of the slave had lost most of its moral degradation, and occupied precisely the same political position in society as the poor labourer, from the moment that the Roman fiscal laws compelled any freeman who had cultivated lands for the space of thirty years, to remain for ever attached, with his descendants, to the same estate.† The mass of the lower orders were, from that period, blended into one class; the slave rose to be a member of this body; the freemen descended, but his descent was necessary for the improvement of the great bulk of the human race, and for the extinction of slavery. Such was the progress of civilization in the eastern empire. The measures of Justinian, which, by their fiscal rapacity, tended to sink the free population to the same state of poverty as the slaves, really prepared

\* *Cod. Theod.* xi. tit. 3. l. 2. *sine censu vel reliquis fundum comparari non posses.* *Cod. Just.* xi. tit. 47, 57, *De Agriculis et Censitis et Colonis.* I am inclined to attribute the law of Zeno against private prisons in the provinces, in some measure, to a fiscal motive. Tit. 5.

† *Cod. Just.* xi. tit. 47. l. 18. *De Agriculis*, and l. 23. 1.

the way for the general improvement of the human race.

Justinian found the central administration still aided and controlled by the municipal institutions of the Greek cities, and of the numerous corporate communities throughout the empire, as well as by the religious assemblies of the orthodox and heterodox congregations. The ancient world still existed. Consuls were still named. Rome, though subject to the Goths, preserved its senate. Constantinople enjoyed all the license of the hippodrome; and Alexandria its public distributions of grain. Athens and Sparta were still governed as little states, and a body of Greek provincial militia still guarded the pass of Thermopylæ. The Greek cities possessed their own revenues, and maintained their roads, schools, hospitals, police, public buildings, and aqueducts; they pensioned professors and public physicians, and kept their streets paved, cleaned, and lighted. The people still enjoyed their local festivals and games; and though music had supplanted poetry, the theatres were still open for the public amusement.

Justinian defaced these traces of the ancient world far more rapidly in Greece, than Theodoric in Italy. He was a merciless reformer, and his reforms were directed solely by fiscal calculations.\* The consulate was abolished, to save the expenses attendant on the installation of the consuls. The Roman senators were exterminated in the Italian wars, during which the ancient race of the inhabi-

\* Compare LEONIS *Novellæ*, xlvi. and xlvii.



tants of Rome was nearly destroyed.\* Alexandria was deprived of its supplies of grain, and the Greeks in Egypt were reduced in number and consideration. Antioch was sacked by Chosroes, and the position of the Greek population of Syria permanently weakened.

But it was in Greece itself that the Hellenic race and institutions received the severest blow. Justinian seized the revenues of the free cities, and deprived them of their most valuable privileges. The loss of their revenues compromised their political existence. Poverty produced barbarism. Roads, streets, and public buildings began to be neglected. That want of police, which characterizes the middle ages, began to be felt in the East. Public instruction was neglected for the public charities; the professors and the physicians were robbed of the funds destined for their support. The municipalities themselves continued to exist in an enfeebled state, for Justinian affected to reform, but never attempted to destroy them; and even his libeller, Procopius, only accuses him of plundering, not of murdering them. The poverty of the Greeks rendered it impossible for them to supply their municipalities with new funds, or even to allow local taxes to be imposed, for maintaining the old establishments. At this crisis, the population was saved from utter barbarism, by the close connection which existed between the clergy and

\* When Rome was repopled, a senate seems to have again arisen, but it only perpetuated the name, and a mortal blow was given to the power of the municipality. The pope assumed the direction of civil affairs, and prepared the way for his future temporal sovereignty. See *Geschichte des Roemischen Rechts im Mittelalter*. F. C. VON SAVIGNY, vol. i. p. 367.

the people, and the powerful influence of the church. The clergy and the magistrates, the people and their leaders, in the Greek provinces, were united by common language, feelings, and prejudices ; and the clergy, as the most powerful class of the community, henceforth took the lead in all public business. They lent their aid to replace the charitable institutions, the means of instruction, and the knowledge of the healing art, which was still required ; they supported the communal and municipal organization of the people ; but, while preserving the local feelings of the Greeks, they laid the foundation of a general national organization. History supplies few materials to illustrate the precise period at which the clergy in Greece formed its alliance with the municipal organization of the people, independent of the political authority ; but the alliance became of great national importance, and began to exercise permanent effects on the social existence of the Greeks, after the municipalities had been impoverished by Justinian's reforms.

## SECTION II. — MILITARY FORCES OF THE EMPIRE.

THE history of the wars and conquests of Justinian is narrated by Procopius, the secretary of Belisarius, who was often an eye-witness of the events which he records, with a minuteness which supplies much valuable information on the military system of the age. The expeditions of the Roman armies were so widely extended, that most of the nations of the world were brought into direct

communication with the empire. During the time Justinian's generals were changing the state of Europe, and destroying some of the nations which had dismembered the western empire, circumstances beyond the control of that international system of policy, of which the sovereigns of Constantinople and Persia were the arbiters, produced a general movement in the population of central Asia. The whole human race was in a state of convulsive agitation, from the frontiers of China to the shores of the Atlantic. This agitation destroyed many of the existing governments, and exterminated several powerful nations, while, at the same time, it laid the foundation of the power of new states and peoples, some of which have maintained their existence to the present times.

The eastern empire bore no inconsiderable part in raising this mighty storm in the West, and in quelling its violence in the East; in exterminating the Goths and Vandals, and in arresting the progress of the Avars and the Turks. Yet, the number and composition of the Roman armies have often been treated, by historians, as weak and contemptible. It is impossible, in this sketch, to attempt any examination of the whole military establishment of the Roman empire, during Justinian's reign; but, in noticing the influence exercised by the military system on the Greek population, it is necessary to make a few general observations.\* The army consisted of two distinct classes,—the regular troops, and the corps of mercenaries. The

\* LORD MAHON, in his *Life of Belisarius*, (chap. i.) gives a sketch of the Roman armies in Justinian's reign.

regular troops were composed, both of native subjects of the Roman empire, raised by conscription, and of barbarians, who had been allowed to occupy lands within the emperor's dominions, and to retain their own usages, on the condition of furnishing a fixed number of recruits for the army. The Roman government still clung to the great law of the empire, that the portion of its subjects which paid the land-tax, could not be allowed to escape that burden by entering into the army.\* The proprietors of the land were responsible for the tribute, the cultivators of the soil secured the amount of the public revenues; neither could be permitted to forego their fiscal obligations for their military duties. For some centuries it had been more economical to purchase the service of the barbarians, than to employ native troops; and, perhaps, had not the oppressive system of the imperial administration diminished the resources of the state, by consuming the capital of the people, this might have long continued to be the case.† Native troops were, however, always drawn from the mountainous districts, which paid a scanty tribute, and in which the population found difficulty in procuring subsistence. The invasions of the barbarians, likewise, threw numbers of the peasantry of the provinces to the south of the Danube, out of employment, and many of these entered the army. A supply of recruits was likewise obtained from the

\* Citizens were not allowed to possess arms except for hunting and travelling. *Corpus Juris Civilis. Pand.* 48. tit. 6. *Cod.* 9. 12.

† Observe our own system in India.

idle and needy population of the towns.\* The most active and intelligent soldiers were placed in the cavalry,—a force that was drilled with the greatest care, subjected to the most exact discipline, and which belied not the glory of the Roman arms in the field of battle.† As the higher and middling classes in the provinces had, for ages, been excluded from the military profession, and the army been at last composed chiefly of the rudest and most ignorant peasants, of enfranchised slaves, and naturalized barbarians, military service was viewed with aversion; and the greatest repugnance arose among the civilians to become soldiers. In the meantime, the depopulation of the empire daily increased the difficulty of raising the number of recruits required for a service, which embraced an immense extent of territory, and entailed a great destruction of human life.

The troops of the line, but particularly the infantry, had deteriorated considerably in Justinian's time; but the artillery and engineer department was not much inferior, in science and efficiency, to

\* Slaves were, of course, excluded from military service by the Roman laws; yet, in the decline of the empire, they were sometimes enfranchised in order to be admitted as recruits; and Justinian declares the slave free who had served in the army with his master's consent. The enactment proves, that slaves were rapidly attaining the level to which the free population had sunk. *Novell.* 81.

† The cavalry was carefully trained to act on foot, and its steady behaviour on dismounting, when surrounded by superior numbers, proves the perfection of the Roman discipline, even in the time of Justinian. Procopius mentions this trait in his description of the battle of Callinicum. *De Bell. Pers.* 1. 18. Salomon made use of the same formation of the cavalry on foot against the African Moors. *Vand.* book 2. c. 12. It was again employed at the battle of Solacon, in the reign of the Emperor Maurice. THEOPHYLACTUS, *Simoc.* ii. 4.

what it had been in the best days of the empire. Its resources, not its knowledge, had diminished. The same arsenals continued to exist; mere mechanical skill had been uninterruptedly exercised, and the constant demand which had existed for military mechanicians, armourers, and engineers, had never allowed the theoretical instructions of this class to be neglected, nor their practical skill to decline, from want of employment. This fact requires to be borne in mind.\*

The mercenaries, however, formed the most valued and brilliant portion of the army; and it was the fashion of the day to copy and admire the dress and manners of the barbarian cavalry. The empire was now surrounded by numbers of petty princes, who, though they had seized possession of provinces once belonging to the Romans, by force, and had often engaged in war with the emperor, still acknowledged a certain degree of dependence on the Roman power. Some of them, as the kings of the Heruls and the Gepids, and the king of Colchis, held their regal rank, by a regular investiture, from Justinian. These princes, and the kings of the Lombards, Huns, Saracens, and Moors, all received regular subsidies. Some of them furnished a number of their best warriors, who entered the

\* The engineers of Theodoric the Great could not be superior to those of Justinian, for Theodoric had often been obliged to obtain artists from the East; yet the tomb of Theodoric, near Ravenna, rivals the remains of the anti-Homeric times at Mycenæ. The circular stone of the dome is 35 feet in diameter, and weighs 940,000lbs; yet it is supposed to have been brought from the quarries in Istria. See the plates in the *Histoire de l'Art par les Monumens, depuis sa Décadence au IV<sup>e</sup> siècle, par SEROUX D'AGINCOURT*, tom. i. pl. xviii.

Roman service, and served in separate bands, under their own leaders, and with their national weapons, but subjected to the regular organization and discipline of the Roman armies, though not to the Roman system of military exercises and manœuvres. Some of these corps of barbarians were also formed of volunteers, who were attracted by the high pay which they received, and the license with which they were allowed to behave.

The superiority of these troops arose from natural causes. The northern nations who invaded the empire, consisted of a population trained from infancy to warlike exercises, and following no profession but that of arms. The lands which they occupied were cultivated by the labour of their slaves or subjects, and their only pecuniary resources arose from the plunder of their neighbours, or the subsidies of the Roman emperors. Their habits of life, the celerity of their movements, and the excellence of their armour, rendered them the choicest troops of the age; and their most active warriors were generally engaged to serve in the imperial forces. The emperors preferred armies composed of a number of motley bands of mercenary foreigners, attached to their own persons by high pay, and commanded by chiefs who could never pretend to political rank, to risking the fate of their throne, by intrusting the command of a national army to a native general, who, from a popular soldier, might become a dangerous rival.\* We must, however, not forget to observe, that the

\* Justinian, however, sometimes united the civil and military power. *C. J. I.* 45, 46, 49. *Norell.* 24—31.

barbarian mercenaries in the service of Rome, generally proved far more efficient troops than their free countrymen; and that, after all, the native Roman cavalry of Justinian's army, the Cataphracti, sheathed in complete steel on the Persian model, and armed with the Grecian spear, were still the best troops in a field of battle, and were the real type of the chivalry of the middle ages.

Justinian weakened the Roman army, in several ways, by his measures of reform. His anxiety to reduce its expenditure induced him to diminish the establishment of camels, horses, and chariots, which attended the troops for transporting the military machines and baggage, and which was very large, as it was calculated to save the peasantry from any danger of having their labours interrupted, or their cattle seized, under the pretext of being required for transport. Numerous abuses were introduced, by diminishing the pay of the troops, and making the payments with great irregularity. At the same time, the efficiency of the army in the field was more seriously injured, by continuing the policy adopted by Anastasius, of restricting the power of the generals; a policy, however, which, it must be confessed, was not unnecessary in order to avoid greater evils. This is evident from the numerous rebellions in Justinian's reign, and the absolute want of any national or patriotic feeling in the majority of the Roman officers. Large armies were at times composed of a number of corps, each commanded by its own officer, over whom the nominal commander-in-chief had little or no authority; and it is to this circumstance that the unfortunate results of some of



the Gothic and Persian campaigns are to be attributed, and not to any inferiority of the Roman troops. Even Belisarius himself, though he gave many proofs of attachment to Justinian's throne, was watched with the greatest jealousy. He was treated with constant distrust, and his officers were at times encouraged to dispute his measures, and never punished for disobeying his orders.\* The fact is, that Belisarius might, if so disposed, have assumed the purple, and perhaps dethroned his master. Narses was the only general who was implicitly trusted and steadily supported; but Narses was an aged eunuch, and could never have become emperor.

The imperial military forces consisted of one hundred and fifty thousand men; and though the extent of the frontier, which these troops were compelled to guard, was very great, and lay open to the incursions of many active hostile tribes, still Justinian was able to assemble some admirably appointed armies, for his foreign expeditions.† The armament which accompanied Belisarius to Africa consisted of

\* Narses had evidently been sent to Italy by Justinian before the conquest of Witiges, expressly to watch Belisarius, and guard against his acquiring too much personal influence over the troops. The circumstance of officers of rank being allowed to maintain a large body-guard of cavalry, the members of which swore fidelity to their chief, as well as allegiance to the emperor, is a singular fact when contrasted with the imperial jealousy. The guards of Belisarius amounted to seven thousand men, after his return from the conquest of Italy.

† Agathias states, that the military establishment of the empire once consisted of 645,000 men. The statement seems to have rested on official documents, as it is repeated by another writer. It probably included the local militia and the garrisons, as well as the regular army. AGATHIAS, v. p. 157, ed. Par. JOANNES ANTIOCHENUS, in *Collectaneis*. See the note to the *Anecdotes of PROCOPIUS*, p. 164, ed. Par. and vol. iii. p. 454, of the edition of Bonn. GIBBON, i. 27, states the Roman forces, in the time of Hadrian, at 375,000, a number which seems too small for any thing but the regular army.

ten thousand infantry, five thousand cavalry, and twenty thousand sailors. Belisarius must have had about thirty thousand troops under his command in Italy, before the taking of Ravenna. Germanus, when he arrived in Africa, found that only one-third of the Roman troops about Carthage had remained faithful, and the rebels under Stozas amounted to eight thousand men. As there were still troops in Numidia which had not joined the deserters, the whole Roman force in Africa cannot have been less than fifteen thousand. Narses, in the year 551, when the empire began to shew evident proofs of the bad effects of Justinian's government, could assemble an army of thirty thousand chosen troops, an army which defeated the veterans of Totila, and destroyed the fierce bands of Franks and Alamanns which hoped to wrest Italy from the Romans. The character of the Roman troops, in spite of all that modern writers have said to depreciate it, still stood so high, that Totila, the warlike monarch of the Goths, strove to induce them to join his standard by offers of high pay. None had yet been equal to the Romans in the field of battle; and their exploits in Spain, Africa, Colchis, and Mesopotamia, prove their excellence; though the defeats which they sustained, both from the Persians and on the Danube, reveal the fact, that their enemies were improving in military science, and watching every opportunity of availing themselves of any neglect of the Roman government, in maintaining the efficiency of the army.

Numerous examples could be cited of the most incredible disorder in the armies, — originating generally in the misconduct of the imperial govern-

ment. Belisarius attempted, but found it impossible, to enforce the strictest discipline,\* when the soldiers were unpaid, and the officers authorized to act independently of his orders. Two thousand Heruls ventured to quit his standard in Italy, and, after marching round the Adriatic, were pardoned by Justinian, and again engaged in the imperial service. Procopius mentions repeatedly that the conduct of the unpaid and unpunished troops ruined the provinces; and, in Africa, no less than three Roman officers, Stozas, Maximin, and Gontharis, attempted to render themselves independent, and were supported by large bodies of troops.† The Greeks were the only portion of the population who were considered as sincerely attached to the imperial government, or, at least, who would readily defend it against every enemy; and accordingly, Gontharis, when he wished to secure Carthage, ordered all the Greeks to be murdered without distinction. The Greeks were, however, from their position and rank in society as burgesses, or taxpayers, almost entirely excluded from the army, and, though they furnished the greater part of the sailors for the fleet, they were generally looked upon as an unwarlike population. Witiges, the Gothic king, calls the Roman army of Belisarius, an army of Greeks, a band of pirates, actors, and mountebanks.

\* At the commencement of his African expedition he executed two Huns for killing one of their companions in a drunken quarrel.

† Constantine, one of the officers of the army in Italy, attempted to assassinate Belisarius, who had ordered him to restore property which he had plundered. The African army rebelled against John the patrician.—*COEPPUS*, vii. 50. The garrison of Petra entered the service of Chosroes.—*PROCOPIUS*, *Pers.* ii. 17. That of Spoleto joined Totila.—*Goth.* iii. 12; see also iv. 26.

One of the most unfortunate measures of Justinian was the disbanding all the provincial militia. This is incidentally mentioned in the *Anecdotes* of Procopius, who informs us, that Thermopylæ had been previously guarded by two thousand of this militia; but that this corps was dissolved, and a garrison of regular troops placed in Greece.\* The measure was probably dictated rather by financial motives, than by any fear of popular insurrection; but its effects were extremely injurious to the empire, in the declining state of society, and in the increasing disorganization of the central power; and it prepared the way for the easy conquests of the Avars and Arabs. Justinian was desirous of centralizing all power, and rendering all public burdens systematic; and had adopted the opinion, that it was cheaper to defend the empire by walls and fortresses, than by a moveable army. The practice of moving the troops, with great celerity, to defend the frontiers, had induced the officers to abandon the ancient practice of fortifying a regular camp, and, at last, even the art of encamping was neglected.\* The barbarians, however, could always move with greater rapidity than the regular troops of the empire.

To secure the frontiers, Justinian adopted a plan of constructing extensive lines, supported by innumerable forts and castles, in which he placed garrisons, in order that they might be ready to sally out on the invading bands. These lines extended from the Adriatic to the Black Sea, and were

\* PROCOPIUS, *Anecd.* 26. vol. iii. 147, ed. Bonn. *Goth.* iv. 26.

† MENANDRI. *Frag.* p. 440, ed. Bonn.

farther strengthened by the long wall of Anastasius, which covered Constantinople, by walls protecting the Thracian Chersonesus, and the Peninsula of Pallene, and by fortifications at Thermopylæ, and at the Isthmus of Corinth, which were all carefully repaired. At all these ports, permanent garrisons were maintained. The eulogy of Procopius on the public edifices of Justinian, seems almost irreconcilable with the events of the latter years of his reign; for Zabergan, the Bulgarian monarch, penetrated through breaches he found unrepaired in the long wall, and advanced almost to the very suburbs of Constantinople. In this crisis, the neglect with which the emperor had treated the troops, and the abuses which he had permitted in the formation of his corps of guards, most of whom had purchased their rank as a title to rations, exposed the empire to the greatest danger. Belisarius was, fortunately, still living; he soon assembled a number of veterans sufficient to compel the Bulgarians to effect a precipitate retreat.\*

Another instance of the declension of military tactics may be mentioned, as it must have originated in the army itself, and not in consequence of any arrangements of the government. The combined manœuvres of the divisions of the regiments had been so neglected, that the bugle-calls once used had fallen into desuetude, and were unknown to the soldiers. The motley recruits, of dissimilar habits, could not acquire, with the requisite rapidity,

\* The account Agathias gives of this expedition, is adorned with too many rhetorical flights to be received literally.

a perception of the delicacy of the ancient music, and the Roman infantry no longer moved

In perfect phalanx, to the Dorian mood,  
Of flutes and soft recorders.

It happened, during the war with the Goths in Italy, that Belisarius was placed in difficulty, from the want of an instantaneous means of communicating orders to the troops engaged in skirmishing, during the siege of Auximum. On this occasion, it was suggested to him by Procopius, to replace the forgotten bugle calls, by making use of the brazen trumpet of the cavalry to sound a charge, and of the infantry bugle, to summon a retreat.\*

Foreigners were preferred by the emperors, as the occupants of the highest military commands; and the confidence with which the barbarian chiefs were honoured by the court, enabled many to reach the highest rank in the army. Narses, the most distinguished military leader after Belisarius, was a Pers-Armenian captive. Peter, who commanded against the Persians in the campaign of 528, was also a Pers-Armenian. Phuras, who besieged Gelimer in Mount Pappua, was a Herul. Mondon, who commanded in Illyria and Dalmatia, was a Gepid prince. Hilbud, who, after several victories, perished with his army in defending the frontiers against the Sclavonians, was of northern descent, as may be inferred from his name. Salomon, who governed Africa with great courage and ability, was

\* PROCOPIUS, *Goth.* ii. 24. The bugle of the infantry was composed of wood and leather.

a eunuch from Dara. Artaban was an Armenian prince. John Troglita, the patrician, the hero of the poem of Corippus, called the Johannid, is also supposed to have been an Armenian.\* Yet the empire might still have furnished excellent officers, as well as valiant troops; for the Isaurians and Thracians continued to distinguish themselves in every field of battle, and were equal in courage to the fiercest of the barbarians.

It became the fashion in the army to imitate the manners and habits of the barbarians; their headlong personal courage became the most admired quality, even in the highest rank; and nothing tended more to hasten the progress of the decay of the military art. The officers in the Roman armies became more intent on distinguishing themselves for personal exploits, than for exact order and strict discipline, maintained in their corps. Even Belisarius himself appears, at times, to have forgotten the duties of a general, in his eagerness to exhibit his personal valour on his bay charger; though he may, on such occasions, have considered, that the necessity of keeping up the spirits of his army was a sufficient apology for his rashness. Unquestionably the army, as a military establishment, had declined in excellence ere Justinian ascended the throne, and his reign tended to sink it much lower; yet it is probable, that it was never more remark-

\* LE BEAU, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, tom. ix. 91. 93. *Notes de SAINT MARTIN*. Many more might be added. John, the Armenian, killed in the pursuit of Gelimer. Akoum, a Hun, commanded the troops in Illyria.—THEOPH. p. 184. Peran, son of a king of Iberia; Bessas, a Goth, but subject of the empire; Isaac, an Armenian; Philemuth, a Hun, were all generals. See the *Index* to Procopius.

able for the enterprising valour of its officers, or for their personal skill in the use of their weapons. The death of numbers of the highest rank, in battles and skirmishes, in which they rashly engaged, proves this fact. There was, however, one important feature of ancient tactics still preserved in the Roman armies, which gave them a decided superiority over their enemies. They had still the confidence in their discipline and skill to form their ranks, and encounter their opponents, in line; the bravest of their enemies, whether on the banks of the Danube or the Tigris, only ventured to charge them, or receive their attack in close masses.\*

### SECTION III.—INFLUENCE OF JUSTINIAN'S LEGISLATION ON THE GREEK POPULATION.

THE Greeks long remained strangers to the Roman law. The free cities continued to be governed by their own legal systems and local usages, and the Greek lawyers did not consider it necessary to study the civil law of their masters. But this state of things underwent a great modification, after Constantine had rendered Latin the official language of the East, and transformed the Greek town of Byzantium into the Roman city of Constantinople. The imperial administration, after that period, came into more immediate connection with its eastern subjects; the legislative power of the emperors was more frequently exercised in the

\* Even the rebel troops in Africa, fought in bands, like barbarians, and not in regular ranks, like Romans.



regulation of provincial business; and the Christian church, by uniting the whole Greek population into one body, often called forth general measures of legislation. While the confusion arising from the incongruity of old laws to the new exigencies of society was generally felt, the increasing poverty, depopulation, and want of education in the Greek cities, rendered it difficult to maintain the ancient tribunals. The Greeks were often compelled to study at the universities where Roman jurisprudence alone was cultivated, and thus the municipal law courts were at last guided in their decisions by the rules of Roman law. As the number of the native tribunals decreased, their duties were performed by judges named by the imperial administration; and thus, Roman law, silently, and without any violent change or direct legislative enactment, was generally introduced into Greece.

Justinian, from the moment of his accession to the throne, devoted his attention to the improvement of every department of government, and carried his favourite plan, of centralizing the direction of the complicated machine of the Roman administration in his own person, as far as possible. The necessity of condensing the various authorities of Roman jurisprudence, and of reducing the mass of legal opinions of eminent lawyers into a system of legislative enactments, possessing unity of form, and facility of reference, was deeply felt. Such a system of legislation is useful in every country; but it becomes peculiarly necessary, after a long period of civilization, in an absolute monarchy, in order to restrain the decisions of legal tribunals by published

law, and prevent them from assuming arbitrary power, under the pretext of interpreting obsolete edicts and conflicting decisions. A code of laws, to a certain degree serves as a barrier against despotism, for it supplies the people with the means of calmly confuting the acts of their government, and the decisions of their judges, by the principles of their laws; and, at the same time, it is a useful ally to the absolute sovereign, as it supplies him with increased facilities for detecting legal injustice committed by his official agents.

The faults or merits of Justinian's system of laws belong to the lawyers intrusted with the execution of his project, but the honour of having commanded this work, may be ascribed to the emperor alone. It is to be regretted, that the position of an absolute sovereign is so liable to temptation from passing events, that Justinian himself could not refrain from injuring the surest monument of his fame, by later enactments, which mark too clearly, that they emanated either from his own increasing avarice, or from weakness in yielding to the passions of his wife or courtiers. It could not be expected, that his political sagacity could have devised the necessity of securing the rights of his subjects against the arbitrary exercise of his own power; but he might have consecrated the great principle of equity, that legislation can never act as a retrospective decision; and he might have ordered his magistrates to adopt the oath of the Egyptian judges, who swore, when they entered on office, that they would never depart from the principles of equity, (law,) and that if the sovereign ordered them to do wrong, they would not obey.

Justinian, however, was too much of an eastern despot, and too little of a statesman, to proclaim the law, even while retaining the legislative power in his person, to be superior to the executive branch of the government. But, in maintaining that the laws of Justinian might have been rendered more perfect, and have been framed to confer greater benefits on mankind, it is not to be denied, that the work is one of the most remarkable monuments of human wisdom; and we should remember, with gratitude, that for thirteen hundred years, the Pandects served as the magazine, or source, of legal lore, and constitution of civil rights, to the Christian world, both in the East and in the West.

The government of Justinian's empire was Roman, its official language was Latin. Oriental habits and usages, as well as time and despotic power, had, indeed, introduced modifications in the old forms; but it would be an error to consider the imperial administration as having a Greek character. The accident of the Greek language having become the ordinary dialect in use at court, of Greek municipalities existing and exerting their influence on society, and of the church in the eastern empire being deeply tinctured with Greek national feelings, is apt to create an impression, that the eastern empire had lost something of its Roman pride, in order to adopt a Greek character. The circumstance that its enemies often reproached it with being Greek, may be received as a proof that the imputation was viewed as an insult. As the administration was entirely Roman, the laws of Justinian, the code, the pandects, and the institutions, were published in

Latin, though many of the later decrees (novells) were written in Greek. Nothing can illustrate, in a stronger manner, the artificial and anti-national position of the eastern Roman empire at Constantinople, than this fact, that the Latin language was used in the promulgation of a system of laws for an empire, in which it was spoken by a small portion of the inhabitants, the language of whose church and literature was Greek. Latin was preserved in official business, and in public ceremonies, from feelings of pride connected with the ancient renown of the Romans, and the dignity of the Roman empire. So strong is the hold which antiquated custom maintains over the minds of men, that even a professed reformer, like Justinian, could not break through so irrational a usage, as the publication of the laws for his people, in a language incomprehensible to most of those for whose use they were framed.

The laws and legislation of Justinian throw only an indistinct and vague light, on the state of the Greek population. They were drawn entirely from Roman sources, calculated for a Roman state of society, and occupied with Roman forms and institutions. Justinian was so anxious to preserve them in all their purity, that he adopted two measures to secure them from alteration. The copyists were commanded to refrain from any abridgment, and the commentators were ordered to follow the literal sense of the laws. All schools of law were likewise forbidden, except those of Constantinople, Rome, and Berytus, a regulation which must have been adopted to guard the Roman

law from being corrupted, by falling into the hands of Greek teachers, and becoming confounded with the customary law of the various Greek provinces.\* This restriction, the importance attached to it by the emperor, and the small number of legal students who could receive their education at the three licensed universities,—one of which (that of Rome) was, moreover, at the time of the publication of the law, under the dominion of the Goths,—prove that the Roman law, though that of the administration, was not the universal rule of conduct in the empire. Justinian took every measure which prudence could dictate, to secure the best and purest legal instruction and administration for the Roman tribunals; but it was not his object to force the Roman law on those classes who were not yet governed or guided by it. Nothing proves more completely than this fact, that Justinian was, in his reforms and improvements, guided by the ancient spirit of the Roman government. Had the Roman law been universal in the cities and islands of Greece, the people certainly would not have been condemned to seek their sole legal education at so great a distance. The judges sent from the capital decided according to the Roman law—the municipal magistrates followed local usages.

Justinian's laws were very soon translated into Greek, without the emperor's requiring that these paraphrases should be literal; and Greek commentaries of an explanatory nature were published. This very circumstance seems, indeed, to argue,

\* *Const. ad Antecessores.*

that there must have existed an extensive basis of Greek law, resting on usages and rules drawn from different sources, and which exercised a powerful influence on the Greek population. Had Justinian intended to impose the Roman law on the Greeks, it would have been published by him in an official Greek copy. His novells were subsequently so published, when the case required it. It is evident, nevertheless, that the remains of Greek law were confined to the municipalities, and were rapidly yielding to the superior system of Roman legislation, perfected as this was by the judicious labours of Justinian's counsellors. Some modification was made, in the jurisdiction of the Roman judges and municipal magistrates, at this time; and we must admit the testimony of Procopius as a proof, that Justinian sold judicial offices, and made a traffic of justice, though the vagueness of the accusations do not afford us the means of ascertaining under what pretext the change in the earlier system was adopted. The extent of the jurisdiction of the city magistrates, and the share which the people retained in their election, are subjects which ought to invite the investigation of the lawyers of the new university of Athens. As a general rule, it is doubtful whether the municipal senates of the Greek cities had acquired the right of administering the local affairs of the community, exclusively of all popular control. The existence of Greek corporations in Italy, shews that the Greeks possessed a separate and acknowledged national existence in the Roman empire; for, it is with reference to privileges having a local, and strictly

Greek origin, that the term of a Greek corporation could alone be used. No Greek holding an official situation, would have permitted himself to be styled any thing but a Roman.\*

#### SECTION IV.—INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION, AS IT AFFECTED THE GREEKS.

THE internal administration of Justinian was remarkable for religious intolerance and financial rapacity.† Both assisted in increasing a deep-rooted hatred of the imperial power throughout the provinces, and his successors soon experienced the bitter effects of his policy. Even the commencement of his own reign gave some alarming manifestations of the general feeling. The celebrated sedition of the Nika, though it broke out among the factions of the amphitheatre, acquired its importance, and spread, in consequence of popular dissatisfaction with the fiscal measures of the emperor. This sedition possesses an unfortunate celebrity in the annals of the empire, from the destruction of many public buildings, and numerous works of ancient art, occasioned by the conflagrations raised by the rebels. Belisarius succeeded in suppressing it with considerable difficulty, after much bloodshed, and not until

\* *Geschichte des Römischen Rechts im Mittelalter*. Von F. C. von SAVIGNY, i. 340. I venture to draw a much stronger line of distinction than the learned author, with reference to *Schola Græca*. It would have been absolutely an insult to the eastern empire, to term any thing officially connected with it, Greek.

† EVAGRIUS, iv. 29. PROCOPIUS, *Anecd.* 11.

Justinian had felt his throne in imminent danger. The alarm produced a lasting impression on his mind; and more than one instance occurred during his reign, to remind him, that popular sedition puts a limit to despotic power. At a subsequent period, an insurrection of the people compelled him to abandon a project for recruiting the imperial finances, according to a common resource of arbitrary sovereigns, by debasing the value of the coin.\*

We possess only scanty materials for describing the condition of the Greek population, during the reign of Justinian. The peculiarities which existed in the relations of the Greek provinces and cities with the central administration, had endured for ages,—slowly undergoing the changes produced by time, but without the occurrence of any revolution which called for a general measure of reform, explanatory of the whole system. But, though our information is defective in minuteness of detail, and offers many points which demand the investigation of the learned, still it presents a historical picture, complete in the accuracy of its general outline.

The colossal fabric of the Roman government embraced not only a numerous imperial court and household, an innumerable host of administrators, finance agents, and judges, a powerful army and navy, and a splendid church establishment; it also conferred the privilege of titular nobility on a large portion of the higher classes, both on those who were selected to fill local offices in connection with the public administration, and on those who had held

\* *MALALÆ CH. pars. ii. p. 80, ed. Ven.*



public employments, during some period of their lives. The titles of this nobility were official; its members were the creatures of government, attached to the imperial throne by ties of interest; they were exempted from particular taxes, separated from the body of the people by various privileges, and formed, from their great numbers, rather a distinct nation, than a privileged class. They were scattered over all the provinces of Justinian's empire, from the Atlantic to the Euphrates, and constituted, at this period, the real nucleus of civil society in the Roman world. Of their influence, many distinct traces may be found, even after the extinction of the Roman power, both in the East and in the West.\*

The population of the provinces, and more especially the proprietors and cultivators of the soil, stood completely apart from these representatives of the Roman supremacy, and almost in a state of direct opposition to the government. The weight of the Roman yoke had pressed down all the provincials to nearly the same level. As a general rule, they were excluded from the profession of arms;† their poverty had now caused them to neglect the cultivation of arts, sciences, and

\* *Notitia Dignitatum*, ed. Boecking. *LYDUS de Magistratibus Reipub. Romanae*, ii. 18. *C. T.* vi. tit. 5. *C. J.* xii. 8. "Ut dignitatum ordo servetur." The prefect of Africa was allowed by Justinian to have three hundred and ninety-six officers and clerks, and each of his lieutenants and deputies, fifty. *Cod. Just.* i. 27. 3. Arcadius had forbidden the Comes of the Orient, who was under the orders of prefect of the East, to have more than six hundred. *Just. C.* xii. 57. Compare LACTANTIUS, *De Mort. Pers.* 7. 4. MANRO, *Leben Constantius*, p. 139.

† Some of the states of Greece had preserved their local militia even to Justinian's time, as appears from the existence of the provincial guard for the defence of Thermopylæ, which he disbanded. PROCOPIUS, *Anec.*

literature, and their whole attention was absorbed in watching the increasing rapacity of the imperial treasury, and in finding means to evade the oppression which they saw no possibility of resisting. The land and capitation taxes formed the source of this oppression. No taxes were, perhaps, more equitable in their general principle, and few appear ever to have been administered, for so long a period, with so unfeeling prudence. Their severity had been so gradually increased, that but a very small annual encroachment had been made on the wealth of the empire, and centuries elapsed before its whole accumulated capital was consumed.

The manner of collecting the land and capitation taxes, displays singular ingenuity in the mode of estimating the value of the property to be taxed, and an inhuman sagacity, in framing a system capable of extracting the last farthing which that property could yield. Registers of the whole property and population of the empire, had been established by Julius Cæsar, extended by Augustus, and remodelled by Diocletian and Constantine. These registers underwent a public revision every fifteenth year, but the amount of the land-tax and capitation was annually fixed by an imperial ordinance. The whole empire had been surveyed, and divided into *capita*, or hides of land.\* The proprietors of these capita were grouped together in communities, the wealthier members of which

\* The capita were not only assessed at different amounts, in the different provinces, according to circumstances, but even in the same provinces, where they were assessed at the same amount, their size would differ according to the fertility of the district. They corresponded to the modern *χωράγια*.

were formed into a permanent magistracy, and rendered liable for the amount of the taxes due by their community. The same law of responsibility was applied to the senates and magistrates of cities and free states. Confiscation of private property had, from the earliest days of the empire, been regarded as an important financial resource. In the days of Tiberius, the nobles of Rome, whose power, influence, and character alarmed the jealous tyrant, were swept away. Nero attacked the wealthy to fill his exhausted treasury; and from that time to the days of Justinian, the richest individuals in the capital and the provinces, had been systematically punished for every offence, by the confiscation of their fortunes. The pages of Suetonius and Tacitus, of Zosimus and Procopius, attest the extent and duration of this war against private wealth. Now, in the eyes of the Roman government, the greatest political offence was the failure to perform a public duty; and the most important duty of a Roman subject had long been, to furnish the amount of taxes required by the state. The increase of the public burdens at last proceeded so far, that every year brought with it a failure in the taxes of some province, and, consequently, the confiscation of the private property of the wealthiest citizens of the insolvent district; until, at last, all the proprietors and cultivators were reduced to nearly the same level. The poor and ignorant inhabitants of Greece forgot the literature and arts of their ancestors; and as they had no longer any thing to sell, or the means of purchasing foreign commodities, money ceased to

circulate, and silver and gold became rare. We shall afterwards see how the orthodox church saved the Greek nation from barbarism, and how commerce saved the Roman empire from immediate ruin, and the Greeks from extermination.

But, though the proud aristocracy, and the wealthy votaries of art, literature, and philosophy, had totally disappeared ; and though the independent citizens and proprietors now stood scattered over the provinces as isolated individuals, without exercising any direct influence on the character of the age, still the external frame-work of ancient society continued to exist, with some portion of its pomp and greatness. The decay of its majesty and strength was felt ; mankind perceived the approach of a mighty change, but the revolution had not yet arrived ; the past glory of Greece and Rome shed their colouring on the unknown future, and the dark shadow, which that future now throws back when we contemplate Justinian's reign, was then imperceptible.

The institutions of civilized society continued to exist among the Greek population ; and property, though crumbling away under a system of slow corrosion, was regarded, by public opinion, as secure against lawless violence, or indiscriminate confiscation ; and it really was so, when a comparison is made between the condition of a subject of the Roman empire, and a proprietor of the soil in any other country of the then known world. If there was much evil in the state of society, there was also some good ; and when contemplating it from our modern social position, we must never forget, that

the same causes which destroyed the wealth, arts, literature, and civilization of the Romans and Greeks, began to eradicate, from among mankind, the greatest degradation of our species,—the existence of slavery.

Greece presented a singular spectacle in the reign of Justinian. The Greeks, as a people, had lost all their superiority over the other subjects of the Roman empire. The schools of philosophy, which had afforded the last refuge for the ancient literature of the country, had long before fallen into neglect, and were on the very eve of extinction, when Justinian commemorated the epoch of their expiration, and closed them by a public edict. The increasing poverty and ignorance of the inhabitants of Greece had, on the one hand, totally separated the philosophers from the people; but, on the other, they had arrested the progress of Christianity in the thinly peopled districts, and paganism continued to exist in the retired mountains of the Peloponnesus. Those principles of separation, which originated in non-communication of ideas and interests, and which now began to give the Roman empire the aspect of an agglomeration of nations, rather than the appearance of a single state, operated as powerfully on the Greek people, as on the Egyptian, Syrian, and Armenian population. The impoverished landed proprietors, and needy cultivators of the soil—the wealthy and independent merchants—and the servile placemen, and dependents on the imperial administration,—formed themselves into three distinct classes of society, and began to lay the foundations of the social and political constitu-

tion of the Greek people, which, under a variety of modifications, but without any radical change, continued to subsist, until the present century opened a new career to the mental energies of the nation. A strong line of distinction was created between the Greeks in the service of the empire, and the body of the people, both in the towns and country. The mass of the Greeks naturally participated in the general hostility to the Roman administration; yet the immense numbers of them who were employed in the state, and in the highest dignities of the church, neutralized the popular opposition, and prevented the Greek nation from aspiring at a political existence connected with national independence.

It has been already observed, that Justinian restricted the powers, and diminished the revenues, of the Greek municipalities; but that these corporations continued to exist, though shorn of their former splendour. Still, in attempting to form some idea of the aspect and character of the Greek population, of the Greek cities, and of the classic land of the Hellenes, in the reign of Justinian, we must look back to preceding times, and compare it rather with the days of Alexander the Great, than with the times of Mahommed the Second. All the splendid monuments of Grecian architecture, and many of the most beautiful works of Grecian art, still adorned the Agora and the Acropolis of every city in Greece. Where the ancient walls were falling into decay, and the untenanted buildings presented an aspect of ruin, they were cleared away to construct the new fortifications, the churches,

and the monasteries, with which Justinian covered the empire. The hasty construction of these buildings, rapidly erected from the stone and mortar furnished by the ancient structures around, accounts both for their number, and for the facility with which time has effaced almost every trace of their existence. Still, even in architecture, the Roman empire displayed some traces of its greatness; and the church of St Sophia, and the aqueduct of Constantinople, still attest the superiority of Justinian's age, to the subsequent periods, both in the East and in the West.\*

But this superiority of the Greek population over the other inhabitants of the world, must at this time have been most remarkable, in their regulations of internal government and police administration. Public roads were still maintained in a serviceable state, though not equal in appearance, or solidity of construction, to the Appian Way in Italy, which excited the admiration of Procopius.† Streets were kept in repair by the proprietors of the houses forming them.‡ The *astynomoi* and the *agoranomoi* were still elected, but their number often indicated the former greatness of a diminished population. The post-houses, post-mansions, and

\* Procopius, in the *Agoana*, accuses Justinian of neglecting the public aqueducts, but we have no data for ascertaining the precise changes he effected in the water police and administration. The names of the modern officers charged with the distribution of the water of the Cephissus for irrigation, and of the water of the ancient subterraneous aqueduct which supplies Athens, and which supplied it before the days of Pericles, are *ποταμάρχης* and *νεο νεύτης*.

† *De Bello Goth.* i.

‡ *Dig.* xliii. 10. 3. The Greek title, "De Via Publica," &c. is very instructive.

every means of transport, were maintained in good order, but they had long been rendered the means of oppressing the people; and though laws had often been passed to prevent the provincials from suffering from the exactions of imperial officers when travelling, the extent of the abuses was beginning to ruin the establishment.\* Still the Roman empire, to the latest period of its existence, paid considerable attention to the police of the public roads, and was long indebted to this care for the preservation of its military superiority over its enemies, and that of its lucrative commerce.

The activity of the government in clearing the country of robbers and banditti, and the singular severity of the laws on this subject, shew that the danger of a diminution of the imperial revenues was capable of inspiring the Roman government with energy and vigour.† The ports were carefully cleaned, and their entry indicated by lighthouses, as in earlier times;‡ and, in short, only that portion of ancient civilization, which was too expensive for the diminished resources of the age, had fallen into neglect. Utility and convenience were universally sought, both in private and public life; but solidity, taste, and the durability which aspires at immortality, were no longer regarded as objects of attainable ambition. The basilica, or the monastery, constructed by breaking to pieces the solid blocks of a neglected city wall, and cemented together by

\* *Cod. Theod.* viii. tit. 5. "De Cursu Publico."

† *Cod. Just.* i. 55. 6. "De Defensoribus Civitatum." *C. J.* 10. 75. "De Irenarchia." *C. J.* ix. 47. 18. "De Pœnis."

‡ *PLIN. H. N.* xxxv. 12. shews, that the provincial towns of Ostia and Ravenna had borrowed this Greek invention.



lime burnt from the marble of a desecrated temple, or heathen tomb, was intended to contain a certain number of persons; and the cost of the building, and its temporary sufficiency for the required purpose, were just as much the general object of the architect's attention, in the time of Justinian, as in our own.

The worst feature of Justinian's administration was its venality. This vice, it is true, generally prevails in an administration uninfluenced by public opinion, and based on an organized bureaucracy, whenever the corps of administrators becomes too numerous for the moral character of the individuals, to be under the control of their superiors; for usage secures to them a permanent official position. Whether the supreme political power, therefore, be constituted as a despotic monarchy, or a democratic republic, history shews that the same causes have more than once produced this effect. Justinian, however, countenanced the venality of his subordinates, by an open sale of offices; and the violent complaints of Procopius are confirmed by the legislative measures of the emperor.\* When shame prevented the emperor himself from selling an official appointment, he did not blush to order the payment of a stated sum to be made to the Empress Theodora.† This conduct opened a door to every abuse on the part of the imperial ministers and provincial governors, and contributed, in no small degree, to the misfortunes of Justin the Second, and

\* PROCOPIUS, *Arc. Cod. Just.* i. 27. 1. 2. "De Officio Præfecti Prætorio Africæ." *Nov.* 8. *Nov.* 24.

† *Nov.* 30. c. 6. pr. s. 1.

the diminution of the influence of the Roman administration in the distant provinces, and tended to neutralize the benefits which Justinian had conferred on the empire, by his legislative compilations.

One of the strongest proofs of the declining condition of the Greek nation, is to be found in the care with which every misfortune of this period is recorded in history. It is only when little hope is felt of repairing the ravages of disease, fire, and earthquakes, that these evils are regarded as affecting the prosperity of a nation. In an improving state of society, great as their ravages may prove, they are only personal misfortunes; the void which they create in the population is quickly replaced, and the property which they may destroy rises from its ruins, with an increase of beauty. But when it happens that a pestilence leaves a country depopulated for many generations, and that conflagrations and earthquakes ruin cities, which are never again reconstructed of their former size—these evils are apt to be mistaken by the people as the primary cause of the national decline, and acquire an undue historical importance in the popular mind. The age of Justinian was remarkable for a terrible pestilence which ravaged every province of the empire in succession, for many famines which swept away no inconsiderable portion of the population, and for earthquakes which laid waste no small number of the most flourishing and populous cities of the empire.

Greece had suffered very little from hostile attacks after the departure of Alaric; for the piratical incursions of Genseric were neither very extensive nor very successful; and after the time

of these barbarians, the ravages of earthquakes begin to figure in history, as an important cause of the impoverished and declining condition of the country.\* The Huns, it is true, extended their plundering expeditions, in the year 540, as far as the Isthmus of Corinth, but they do not appear to have succeeded in capturing a single town of any note.† The fleet of Totila plundered Corcyra, and the coast of Epirus, from Nicopolis up to Dodona; but these misfortunes were temporary and partial, and could have caused no irreparable loss, either of life or property, in a prosperous community. The fact appears to be, that Greece was in a declining condition; but that the means of subsistence were abundant, and the population had but an incorrect and vague conception of the means by which the government was consuming their substance, and reducing them to a state of barbarism. In this state of things, several earthquakes, of singular violence, and attended by unusual phenomena, made a deep impression on men's minds. Corinth, which was still a populous city, Patras, Naupactus, Chæronea, and Coronea, were all laid in ruins. An immense assembly of Greeks was collected at the time to celebrate a public festival; the whole population was swallowed up in the midst of their ceremonies. The waters of the Maliac Gulf retired suddenly, and left the shores of Thermopylæ dry; but the sea, suddenly returning with violence,

\* The word *Greece* represents the provinces of Achaia, Thessaly, Southern or New Epirus, and the islands of the Archipelago, in the official division of the empire.

† PROCOF. *Pers.* ii. 4.

swept up the valley of the Sperchius, and carried away the inhabitants of the land. In an age of ignorance and superstition, when the prospects of mankind were despondent, these awful occurrences could not fail to produce an alarming effect on men's minds, and were not unnaturally regarded as a supernatural confirmation of the despair which led many to imagine that the ruin of our globe was approaching, while some conceived, with Procopius, that Justinian was the demon destined to complete the catastrophe of the human race.

The condition of the Greek population in Achæa, seems to have been as little understood by the courtiers of Justinian as by ourselves. The splendid appearance which the ancient monuments, shining in the clear sky with the freshness of recent constructions, gave to the Greek cities, induced the Constantinopolitans, and other strangers who visited the country, to suppose that the aspect of elegance, and delicacy of finish, every where apparent, were the result of constant municipal expenditure. As the buildings of Constantine and Theodosius in the capital, were probably begrimed with dust and smoke, it was hardly natural to conceive that those of Pericles and Epaminondas could retain a perpetual youth. The celebrity of the city of Athens, the privileges which it still enjoyed, the society by which it was frequented, as an agreeable residence, as a school for study, or as a place of retirement for the wealthy literary men of the age, gave the people of the capital a far too exalted idea of the well-being of Greece. The cotemporaries of Justinian judged the Greeks of their age, by placing them in too

close a relation with the inhabitants of the free states of antiquity ; we, on the contrary, are too apt to confound them with the rude inhabitants of the Morea, who recovered their land from the Sclavonian invaders. Had Procopius rightly estimated the condition of the rural population, and reflected on the extreme difficulty which the agriculturist always encounters in quitting his present, and repairing to a distant occupation, with the impossibility of finding money in a country where there are no purchasers, he would not have signalized the penurious disposition of the Greeks as their national characteristic.\* It is, however, evident, that the Greeks of the capital, and of the Roman administration, were now influenced by a very different spirit from that of the inhabitants of the true Hellenic lands ; and this separation of feeling became more and more conspicuous as the empire declined in power. The central administration soon ceased to pay any particular attention to the poor and insignificant province of Achæa, which was sure to furnish its tribute, as it hated the Romans less than it feared the barbarians. From henceforward, therefore, the inhabitants of Hellas become almost lost to the historians of the empire ; and the motley and expatriated population of Constantinople and the Asiatic colonies, are represented to the literary world, as forming the real body of the Greek nation — an error which has concealed the history of a nation from our study, and replaced it by the annals of a court, the records of a government, and a class of society.

\* *De Edificiis*, iv. 11. ταύτη τι τῇ συμπελογία.

SECTION V.—INFLUENCE OF JUSTINIAN'S CONQUESTS  
ON THE GREEK POPULATION, AND THE CHANGE  
EFFECTED BY THE CONQUEST OF THE VANDAL  
KINGDOM OF AFRICA.

THE attention of Justinian's immediate predecessors had been devoted to improving the internal condition of the empire, and their measures had been attended with some success. As the Greeks formed the most important portion of the population, they had participated, in the greatest degree, in this improvement. They were on the eve of securing a national preponderance in the Roman state, when Justinian forced them back into their former secondary condition, by directing his own attention, and the influence of the public administration, to arms and law, the two departments of the Roman government, from which the Greeks, as a nation, were in a great measure excluded. The conquests of Justinian, however, tended to improve the condition of the mercantile and manufacturing portion of the Greek population, by extending its direct relations with the West; and the trading population of Greece began to acquire a considerable influence in public affairs—an influence which tended to support the existence of the Constantinopolitan government, when the frame-work of the Roman imperial administration began to give way in the provinces. But, with the exception of Sicily, and the southern portion of Italy, the whole of Justinian's conquests in the West were peopled by the Latin race; and the inhabitants, though

attached to the imperial government of Constantinople, as the political head of the orthodox church, were already opposed to the Greek nation, as belonging to the Latin, and not to the Greek party, in this orthodox church.

When the Goths, Sueves, and Vandals had completed their establishments in Spain, Africa, and Italy, and their armies were spread over these countries in the shape of land proprietors and rulers, the smallness of their number became apparent to the mass of the population of the conquered; and the barbarians soon lost in individual intercourse as citizens, the superiority which they had enjoyed while united in armed bands. The Romans, in spite of the confiscation of a portion of their estates to enrich their conquerors, and in spite of the oppression with which they had often been treated, still formed the majority of the middling classes; the administration of the greater part of the landed property, the commerce of the country, the municipal and judicial organization, all centred in the hands of the Roman population. In addition to this political existence, they were separated from their conquerors by religion. The northern invaders of the western empire were Arians, the Roman population was orthodox. This religious feeling was so strong, that the catholic king of the Franks, Clovis, was often able to avail himself of the assistance of the orthodox subjects of the Arian Goths, in his wars with the Gothic kings.\* As soon, however, as Justinian had displayed that the eastern empire had recovered some portion of the ancient Roman

\* *Gregory of Tours*, l. ii. c. 37.

vigour, the eyes of all the Roman population of the West, in Spain, Gaul, Africa, and Italy, were directed to the imperial court; and there can be no doubt, that the government of Justinian maintained extensive relations with the Roman population and the orthodox clergy over all Europe.

Justinian had succeeded to the empire while it was embroiled in war with Persia, but he was fortunate enough to conclude a peace with Chosroes the Great, who ascended the Persian throne in the fourth year of his reign. In the East, he could never expect to make any permanent conquests; while in the West, a large portion of the population of the countries which he proposed attacking, was ready to receive his troops with open arms, to assist them in the contest; and in case of success, they were sure to form submissive, and probably attached subjects. Both policy and religion induced Justinian to commence his attacks on the invaders of the Roman empire in Africa. The Vandals were bigoted Arians, their government had been peculiarly tyrannical, they had always treated the Roman inhabitants of Africa as political enemies, and persecuted them as religious opponents. The Visigoths in Spain had occupied two-thirds of the subjugated lands, the Ostrogoths in Italy had been satisfied with one-third; and both these peoples had acknowledged the civil rights of the Romans as citizens and Christians. The Vandals had adopted a different policy. They seized all the richest lands, and the most valuable estates, and exterminated the higher class of the Romans, while they only permitted the poorer proprietors to preserve the



arid and distant parts of the country. Still, the number of Romans excited the fears of the Vandals, who destroyed the walls of the provincial towns, in order to prevent the people from receiving succours from the eastern empire, which might have supported a rebellion. The Roman population was enfeebled by the measures which the Vandals adopted, but its hatred to their government was increased; and when Gelimer's assumption of the royal authority seemed likely to create a civil war, the people of Tripolis rebelled, and solicited assistance from Justinian, even before the arrival of the army of Belisarius.

Justinian, in attempting the reconquest of Africa, could not have overlooked the great wealth of the province at the time of its conquest by Genseric, the distributions of grain which it had furnished for Rome, and the immense tribute which it had once paid. Only a century had elapsed, and Justinian could not have supposed that the wealth and population of the country had suffered, to the extent of their actual diminution, from the oppressive government of the Vandal kings. The conquest of a civilized population by rude warriors, must always be attended by the ruin, and often by the extermination, of the numerous classes which are supported by the profits of those manufactures which are destined for the consumption of the refined. The conquerors despise the appearance of the conquered, and never adopt immediately the costly dresses which they have worn, nor do they adorn their dwellings with the same taste and refinement; while the vanquished are deprived of the wealth necessary to procure these

luxuries. The ruin of a numerous class of manufacturers, with the emigration of a great portion of the industrious population, is an inevitable consequence of this cessation of demand; and a great loss, or rather the instant annihilation, of a large commercial department must take place. Yet the conquerors will long live in wealth and luxury; the accumulated riches of the country will for many years be found amply sufficient to gratify all the desires of the victors, and the whole of its wealth will generally be consumed, and even the power of reproducing it be greatly diminished, ere any signs of poverty are perceived by the conquerors. These facts are illustrated in the clearest manner, by the history of the Vandal domination in Africa. Genseric entered the province, accompanied by eighty thousand souls, of whom fifty thousand only were capable of bearing arms; yet this small horde devoured all the wealth of Africa in the course of a single century, and from an army of warriors, they were converted into a caste of luxurious nobles, living in the splendid villas with which the country round Carthage had been covered, during the peaceful ages which had elapsed since Cæsar had rebuilt the ancient rival of Rome. In order fully to understand the influence of the Vandals on the state of the country which they occupied, it must be observed, that their oppressive government tended so far to lower the condition, and reduce the numbers of the Roman provincials, that the native Moors began to reoccupy the country, from which Roman industry and Roman capital had excluded them. The Moorish population being in a lower

state of civilization than the lowest grade of the Romans, could exist in districts which these had abandoned as uninhabitable, after the destruction of the buildings and plantations, which the existing generation had no means of replacing ; and thus, from the time of the Vandal invasion, and more especially after the civil wars which followed Justinian's conquest of Africa, we find the Moors covering an increased extent of country, and augmenting in numbers and power, as the property of the province was destroyed, and its inhabitants ruined.

When Justinian resolved to attack the Vandals, they were reported to have become one of the most luxurious nations in the world ; and as they continued to affect the character of soldiers, they were admirably armed, and ready to take the field with their whole male population. But they had neglected military discipline and science, and their armies were far more splendid than efficient. Hilderic, the fifth monarch of the Vandal kingdom, the grandson of Genseric, and son of Eudocia, the daughter of the Emperor Valentinian the Third, shewed himself inclined to protect the orthodox and Roman portion of his subjects.\* This disposition, and his Roman descent, excited the suspicion of his Vandal and Arian countrymen, without attaching the orthodox provincials to his hated race.

\* The succession of the Vandal monarchs was as follows :—

Genseric invaded Africa,	A. D.	428
Hanneric ascended the throne,		477
Gundamund,		484
Thorismund,		496
Hilderic,		523
Gelimer seized the crown,		530

Gelimer, the great-grandson of Genseric, availed himself of the general discontent to dethrone Hilderic, but the revolution was not effected without many manifestations of dissatisfaction on the part of some of the Vandals; and the Roman inhabitants of the province of Tripolis, and the Gothic officer who commanded in Sardinia, availed themselves of the opportunity to throw off the yoke of the Vandals, and solicit assistance from Justinian.

The treason of Gelimer afforded Justinian an excellent pretext for intermeddling with the affairs of Africa, and for invading the Vandal kingdom. Belisarius, a general already distinguished by his conduct in the Persian war, was selected to command an expedition of considerable magnitude. Ten thousand infantry, and five thousand cavalry, were embarked in a fleet of five hundred transports, which was protected and escorted by ninety-two light galleys of war. The troops were all veterans, inured to discipline, and the cavalry was composed of the choicest soldiers in the imperial service. After a long navigation, and some delay at Methone, and in Sicily, they reached Africa. The Vandals, who, in the time of Genseric had been redoubted pirates, and, as such, were national enemies of the commercial Greeks, were now too wealthy to court danger, and were ignorant of the approach of the Roman armament, until they received the news that Belisarius was marching towards Carthage. The Vandals were numerous, and doubtless brave, but they were no longer trained to war, or accustomed to regular discipline, and their behaviour in

the field of battle was contemptible. Two engagements of cavalry, in the bloodiest of which the Vandals lost only eight hundred men, decided the fate of Africa, and enabled Belisarius to subjugate the Vandal kingdom. The brothers of Gelimer fell gallantly in the field. His own behaviour renders even his personal courage doubtful,—he fled to the Moors of the mountainous districts, but the misery of barbarous warfare, and the privations of a besieged camp, soon extinguished his feelings of pride, and his love of independence. Belisarius led him prisoner to Constantinople, where he appeared in the pageantry of a triumphal procession. A conquering general, a captive monarch, and a Roman triumph, offered strong temptations to romantic fancies; but as the age indulged only in gross fables, miracles, or rhetorical exaggerations, we are informed, that Gelimer received from Justinian large estates in Galatia, to which he retired with his relations. Justinian offered him the rank of patrician, and a seat in the senate; but he was more attached to his Arian principles, than to his personal dignity, and refused to join the orthodox church.

The great body of the Vandals displayed as little patriotism and fortitude as their king. Some were slain in the war, the rest were incorporated in the Roman armies, or escaped to the Moors. The provincials were allowed to reclaim the lands that had been occupied by the Vandals; the Arian heresy was proscribed, and the very race of these remarkable conquerors was in a short time exterminated, as a single generation sufficed so to confound their women and children in the mass of the

Roman inhabitants of the province, that their very name was totally forgotten. There are few instances in history of a nation disappearing so rapidly, and so completely, as the Vandals of Africa. Their first monarch, Genseric, had been powerful enough to plunder both Rome and Greece, yet his army hardly exceeded fifty thousand men, and his followers, who held the absolute sovereignty of Africa for one hundred and seven years, do not appear to have increased very greatly in number, from the position in which their sudden acquisition of immense wealth had placed them.\*

Belisarius soon found the Roman authority so firmly established round Carthage, that he was able to despatch troops in every direction, in order to secure and extend the new conquest. The western coast was subjected as far as the Straits of Hercules; a garrison was placed in Septum, and a body of troops stationed in Tripolis, to secure the eastern part of this extensive province from the incursions of the Moors. Sardinia, Corsica, Majorca, Minorca, and Ivica, were added to the empire, merely by sending officers to take the command of these islands, and troops to form the garrisons. This fact shews, that the commercial relations of the Greeks, and the civil institutions of the Romans, still exercised a very powerful influence over the population of these islands.

Justinian determined to re-establish the Roman government on precisely the same basis as before the Vandal invasion; but, as the registers of the

\* The Vandal domination in Spain has left a permanent memorial in the name of Andalusia, from Vandalusia.

land-tax and capitation, and the official admeasurement of the estates, no longer existed, officers were sent from Constantinople for the assessment of the taxes; and the old principle of extorting as much of the surplus produce of the land as possible, was adopted as the rule for apportioning the tribute. Yet, in the opinion of the provincials, the financial rapacity of the imperial government was a more tolerable evil than the tyranny of the Vandals, and they remained long sincerely attached to the Roman power. Unfortunately, the rebellion of the barbarian mercenaries, who formed the flower of Justinian's army in Africa, the despair of the persecuted Arians, the seductions of the Vandal women, and the hostile incursions of the Moorish tribes, aided the severity of the taxes, in desolating this flourishing province. The impossibility of Roman subjects' acquiring the possession of arms, and forming themselves into a local militia, even for the protection of their property against the plundering expeditions of the neighbouring barbarians, prevented the African provincials from aspiring after independence, and forced on them the conviction, that they were incapable of defending themselves, without the aid of the experienced though disorderly soldiery of the imperial armies. Religious persecution, financial oppression, the seditions of unpaid troops, and the incursions of barbarous tribes, though they failed to cause a general insurrection of the inhabitants, ruined their wealth, and lessened their numbers. Procopius records the commencement of the desolation of Africa in his time; and subsequently, as the imperial government

grew weaker, more negligent, and more corrupt, it pressed more heavily on the industry and well-being of the provincials, and enabled the barbarous Moors to extend their encroachments on Roman civilization.\*

The glory which Belisarius has gained in history, deserves to be contrasted with the oblivion which has covered the exploits of John the Patrician, one of the ablest generals of Justinian. This experienced general assumed the command in Africa when the province had fallen into a state of great disorder; the inhabitants were exposed to a dangerous coalition of the Moors, and the Roman army was in such a state of destitution, that their leader was compelled to import the necessary provisions for his troops.† Though John defeated the Moors, and restored prosperity to the province, his name is almost forgotten. His actions and talents only affected the interests of the Byzantine empire, and prolonged the existence of the Roman province of Africa; they exerted no influence on the fate of any of the European nations, whose history has been the object of study in modern times, so that they were utterly forgotten, when the recently discovered poetry of Corippus, one of the last and worst of the Roman poets, has rescued them from complete oblivion.

\* PROCOPIUS, *De Bello Vand.* ii. 14—28. *Arcana*, 18. CORIPPUS, *Johannides*.

† CORIPPUS, *Johannides*, v. 384.



SECTION VI. — CAUSES OF THE EASY CONQUEST OF THE  
OSTROGOTHIC KINGDOM OF ITALY BY BELISARIUS.

THE empire of the Ostrogoths, though established on principles of a just administration by the wisdom of the great Theodoric, soon began to suffer as complete a national demoralization as that of the Vandals, though the Goths themselves, from being more civilized, and living more directly under the restraint of laws which protected the property of their Roman subjects, had not become individually so enfeebled by the possession of wealth.\* The conquest of Italy had not produced any very great revolution in the state of the country. The Romans had long been accustomed to be defended in name, but, in fact, to be ruled, by the commanders of the mercenary troops in the emperor's service. The Goths, even after the conquest, allowed them to retain two-thirds of their landed estates, with all their moveable property; and as they had really been as completely excluded from military service under their own emperors, as under Theodoric,† their social condition underwent but little change.

\* Odoacer and Theodoric, divided amongst their Gothic followers one-third of the Roman estates in Italy; and, probably, the discipline enforced by Theodoric, and the justice of his administration, rendered this cession of a portion of their property a cheap purchase of freedom from the disorders of the mercenary troops, in the last days of the western empire.—PRACORIUS, *De Bello Goth.* i. 1. For an excellent account of the Ostrogothic government of Italy, see *Essai sur l'état, civil et politique, des peuples d'Italie sous le gouvernement des Goths*, par Sartorius, professor at Göttingen. Paris, 1811; and also, *Geschichte des Ost—Gothischen Reichs in Italien*. VON MANSO, Breslau, 1824.

† That Romans served in the Gothic armies, though the case must have been rare, appears from the passages pointed out by Sartorius. P. 248.

Theodoric had been induced to treat the inhabitants of Italy with mildness, by reasons of policy; the permanent maintenance of his conquests required a fixed revenue, and that revenue could only be supplied by the industry and civilization of his Italian subjects. His sagacity soon told him, that it was wiser to tax the Romans than to plunder them, and that it was also necessary, in order to secure the fruits of a regular system of taxation, to leave them in the possession of those laws and privileges which enabled them to defend their civilization. It is singular, that the empire of Theodoric, the most extensive and most celebrated of those which were formed by the conquerors of the Roman provinces, should have proved the least durable. The justice of Theodoric, and the barbarity of Genseric, were equally ineffectual in consolidating a permanent dominion to their countrymen. The civilization of the Romans was more powerful than the mightiest of the barbarian monarchs and nations; and until that civilization had sunk to the level of their conquerors, and enabled the two races to blend together, the institutions of the Romans were always victorious over the national strength of the barbarians. Under Theodoric, Italy was still a Roman land. The senate of Rome, the municipal councils of the other cities, the old courts of law, the parties of the circus, the blue and the green factions,\* all still existed unchanged—the gladiators still fought with wild beasts in the Coliseum. The orthodox Roman lived under his own law, with his

\* Veneti and Prasini.

own clergy, and the Arian Goth only enjoyed equal liberty. The powerful and the wealthy, whether they were Romans or Goths, were equally sure of obtaining justice; the poor, whether Goths or Romans, were in equal danger of being oppressed.\*

The kingdom which the great Theodoric left to his grandson Athalaric, under the guardianship of his daughter Amalasonta, embraced not only Italy, Sicily, and a portion of the south of France; it also included Dalmatia, a part of Illyricum, Pannonia, Noricum, and Rhætia. In these extensive dominions, the Gothic race formed but a small part of the population; and yet the Goths, from the privileges which they enjoyed, were every where regarded with jealousy by the bulk of the inhabitants. Dissensions soon arose in the royal family; Athalaric died young; Amalasonta was murdered by Theodatus, his successor; and as she had been in constant communication with the court of Constantinople, this crime afforded Justinian a decent pretext for interfering in the affairs of the Goths. To prepare the way for the reconquest of Italy, Belisarius was sent to attack Sicily, which he invaded with an army of seven thousand five hundred men, in the year 535, and subjected it without difficulty. During the same campaign, Dalmatia was conquered by the imperial arms, recovered by the Goths, but again reconquered by Justinian's troops. A rebellion of the troops in Africa arrested, for a while, the progress of Belisarius, and compelled him to visit

\* Theodoric says, in his edict, "*Quod si forsitan persona potentior, aut ejus procurator, vel vicedominus ipsius, aut certe conductor seu barbari, seu Romani, in aliquo genere causæ præsentia non permiserint edicta servari,*" &c.

Carthage; but he returned to Sicily in a short time, and crossing over to Rhegium with his army, marched directly to Naples. As he proceeded, he was every where welcomed by the inhabitants, who were then almost universally Greeks; and even the Gothic commander in the south of Italy favoured the Roman general.\*

The city of Naples made a vigorous defence; but, after a siege of three weeks, it was taken by introducing into the place a body of the troops, concealed in the passage of an aqueduct. As the inhabitants had shewn some disposition to assist the Gothic garrison in defending the city, and as such conduct would greatly increase the difficulty of his campaign in Italy, Belisarius, in order to intimidate the population of the other cities, appears to have winked at the pillage of the town, to have tolerated the massacre of many of the citizens in the churches, where they had sought an asylum, and to have overlooked a sedition of the lowest populace, in which the leaders of the Gothic party were assassinated. From Naples, Belisarius marched forward to Rome.

Only sixty years had elapsed since Rome had been conquered by Odvacer; and during this period, its great population, the ecclesiastical and civil authority of its bishop, the highest dignitary in

\* Evermor, or Eurimond, (for Jornandes gives him one name in his history of the Goths, and another, in his Chronicle,) was the son-in-law of the King Theodotus, yet he joined Belisarius. The Romans seem to have had a party among the Goths; and, after the conquest, many Goths were converted from Arians to Catholics. Jornandes speaks of himself, "Ego item, quamvis agrammatus, Jornandes, ante conversionem meam notarius fui." This, however, implies, perhaps, that he had embraced the clerical life. His Roman attachments are strongly shewn in his works. *De rebus Geticis*, p. 382.

the Christian world, and the influence of its senate, which still continued to be in the eyes of mankind the most honourable political body in existence, enabled it to preserve a species of independent civic constitution. Theodoric had availed himself of this municipal government, to smooth away many of the difficulties, which presented themselves in the administration of Italy. The Goths, however, in leaving the Romans in possession of their own civil laws and institutions, had only increased their aversion to a foreign yoke ; and yet, as they possessed no distinct feelings of nationality, apart from their connection with the imperial domination, and their religious orthodoxy, they never aspired to independence, and were content to turn their eyes towards the emperor of the East as their legitimate sovereign. Belisarius, therefore, entered the " eternal city," rather as a friend and ally, than as a conqueror ; but he had hardly entered it before he perceived, that it would be necessary to take every precaution to defend his conquest against the new Gothic King Witiges. Belisarius repaired the walls of Rome, strengthened them with a breast-work, collected large stores of provisions, and prepared to sustain a long siege.

The Gothic war forms an important epoch in the history of the city of Rome ; for within the space of sixteen years, it changed masters five times, and suffered three severe sieges. Its population was almost destroyed ; its exterior appearance, its public buildings, and its walls, must have undergone many changes, according to the exigencies of the various measures required for its defence. It has, con-

sequently, been too generally assumed, that the existing walls indicate the position of those which Belisarius found, when he entered the city. It ought, however, to be observed, that every reparation and renewal must have diminished their extent, and cut off some obtruding angle, in order to enable the materials of the ruined wall, even with the aid of the surrounding buildings, to suffice for the reconstruction of the new defences. The whole walls of Aurelian, if we suppose them to have been destroyed, would only have sufficed to construct one of two-thirds of their extent, so great is the deterioration of the materials used in such buildings. With the conquest of Rome by Belisarius, the history of the ancient city may be considered as terminating; and with his defence against Witiges, commences the history of the middle ages, of the times of destruction and of change.\*

Witiges laid siege to Rome, with an army said by

\* It is impossible to enter on all the grounds of my opinion, that the present walls of Rome have nothing almost in common with those of Aurelian; but some authority must be cited to indicate the numerous changes made in their construction, consequently, in their extent. Honorius made changes and repairs. Theodoric repaired them. CASSIODORUS VAR. l. ep. 25. 11. ep. 34. Belisarius found them in a ruinous state, the ditch filled up in some places. In general, the sieges during the Gothic war required the reduction of the size of the place, where this was practicable. The words of Procopius indicate that the Flaminian gate of his day did not correspond to the modern *Porta del popolo*. *Goth.* i. 23. The feebleness of the outer wall of the Vivarium, indicates that this was not the original external wall. Totila destroyed about one-third of the wall of Rome. PROCOR. *Goth.* iii. 22. MARCELL. *Chron. ap. Scrinond.* ii. 385. Belisarius must have made changes in repairing this destruction, and Diogenes, who defended Rome against Totila in 548, could hardly fail to do so. Totila added to the walls near the Mole of Adrian. PROCOR. *Goth.* iii. 36; iv. 33. The whole defences must have been remodelled by Narses, as they must have been temporary repairs in many parts. An excellent little work has just been published on this subject,—*De Romæ veteris muris atque portis scripsit*, G. A. Becker, Prof. Lips., Leipsic, 1842.

Procopius to have amounted to 150,000 men, yet this army was insufficient to invest the whole circuit of the city.\* The Gothic king distributed his troops in seven fortified camps; six were formed to surround the city, and the seventh was placed to protect the Milvian bridge over the Tiber. Five camps covered the space from the Prenestine to the Flaminian gates, and the remaining camp was formed beyond the Tiber, in the plain below the Vatican. By these arrangements, the Goths only commanded about half the circuit of Rome, and the roads to Naples and to the mouth of the Tiber remained open. This siege of Rome is a memorable event in the history of Europe, as marking the period, when the generals and viceroys of the Roman emperors commenced the destruction of the monuments of ancient art, with the same indifference as they would have destroyed any other wall; and as illustrating the singular change which had already occurred in the military art, and in the composition of the Roman armies. It is strange to find the tactics of the middle ages described in the Greek of Procopius. The Goths displayed an utter ignorance of the art of war; they had no skill in the use of military engines, and they could not even render their numerical superiority available in assaults. The leading operations of the attack and defence of Rome consisted in a series of cavalry engagements fought under its walls; and in these, the superior discipline and skill of the mercenaries of Belisarius generally secured them the victory.

\* *De Bello Goth.* i. 14.

The Roman cavalry, — for so the mixture of Huns, Heruls, and Armenians, which formed the elite of the army, must be termed, — trusted chiefly to the bow; while the Goths placed their reliance on the lance and sword, which the able manœuvres of their enemies seldom allowed them to use with effect. The infantry of both armies usually remained idle spectators of the combat. Belisarius himself considered it of little use in a field of battle, and when he once reluctantly admitted it, at the pressing solicitation of its commanders, to share in one of his engagements, its defeat, after the exhibition of great bravery on the part both of the officers and men, confirmed him in his preference of the cavalry.

In spite of the prudent arrangements adopted by Belisarius to ensure supplies of provisions, Rome suffered very severely from famine during the siege; but the Gothic army was compelled to undergo equal hardships, and suffered far greater losses from disease. The communications of the garrison with the coast, were for a time interrupted, but, at last, a body of five thousand fresh troops, and abundant supply of provisions, despatched by Justinian to the assistance of Belisarius, entered Rome. Shortly after the arrival of this reinforcement, the Goths found themselves constrained to abandon the siege, in which they had persevered for a year. Justinian again augmented his army in Italy, by sending over seven thousand troops under the command of the cunuch Narses, a man whose talents were in no way inferior to those of Belisarius, and whose name occupies an equally important place in the history



of Italy. The emperor had conferred on Narses an independent authority over his own division, guided by the prudent jealousy which dictated the strictest control over all the powerful generals of the empire, who, in daring to rebel, might perhaps have assumed the purple with some hope of success. Narses, perhaps, presuming too far on his knowledge of Justinian's feelings, ventured to throw serious obstacles in the way of Belisarius; and the dissensions of the two generals delayed the progress of the Roman arms. The Goths availed themselves of the opportunity to continue the war with vigour; they succeeded in reconquering Milan, which had admitted a Roman garrison, and sacked the city, which was second only to Rome, in wealth and population. They massacred the whole male population, and behaved with such cruelty, that three hundred thousand were said to have perished—a number which probably only indicates the whole population of Milan, at this period.\*

A state of warfare soon disorganized the ill-cemented government of the Gothic kingdom; and the ravages caused by the wide extended military operations of the armies, which degenerated into a succession of sieges and skirmishes, created a dreadful famine in the north of Italy. Society made a step towards barbarism; great numbers of the industrious natives perished by actual starvation, and the ranks of the Goths were thinned by misery and disease. Procopius, who was himself in Italy at the time, records a horrible story of two women

\* PROCOPIUS, *De Bello Goth.* ii. 21. A. D. 539.

who lived on human flesh, and were discovered to have murdered seventeen persons, in order to devour their bodies.\* This famine assisted the progress of the Roman arms, as the imperial troops drew their supplies of provisions from the East, while the measures of their enemies were paralyzed by the general want.

Witiges, finding his resources inadequate to check the conquests of Belisarius, solicited the aid of the Franks, and despatched an embassy to Chosroes, to excite the jealousy of the Persian monarch. The Franks, under Theodebert, entered Italy, but they were soon compelled to retire; and Belisarius, being placed at the head of the whole army by the recall of Narses, soon terminated the war. Ravenna, the Gothic capital, was invested; but the siege was more remarkable for the negotiations which were carried on during its progress, than for the military operations. The Goths, with the consent of Witiges, made Belisarius the singular offer of acknowledging him as the Emperor of the West, on condition of his joining his forces to theirs, permitting them to retain their position and property in Italy, and thus ensuring them the possession of their nationality, and their peculiar laws. Perhaps, neither the state of the mercenary army which he commanded, nor the condition of the Gothic nation, rendered the project very feasible. It is certain, that Belisarius only listened to it, in order to hasten the surrender of Ravenna, and secure the person of Witiges, without farther bloodshed. Italy

\* *De Bello Goth.* ii. 30.

submitted to Justinian, and the few Goths who still maintained their independence beyond the Po, pressed Belisarius in vain to declare himself emperor. But even without these solicitations, his power had awakened the fears of his sovereign, and he was recalled, though with honour, from his command in Italy. He returned to Constantinople leading Witiges captive, as he had formerly appeared conducting Gelimer.

Great as the talents of Belisarius really were, and sound as his judgment appears to have been, still it must be confessed, his name occupies a more prominent place in history, than his merits are entitled to claim. The accidents of the conquests which he achieved, by having put an end to two powerful monarchies, of his having led captive to Constantinople the representatives of the dreaded Genseric and the great Theodoric, and of his having enjoyed the singular good fortune, of having his exploits recorded in the classic language of Procopius, the last historian of the Greeks,—all these circumstances, added to the celebrity which the improbable tale of his mendicity has acquired in modern times, have made the very name of Belisarius an expression of heroic greatness, reduced to abject misery by royal ingratitude. Belisarius did not despise nor neglect wealth: he accumulated a degree of riches which could not have been acquired by any commander-in-chief, amidst the wars and famines of the period, without rendering the military and civil administration subservient to his pecuniary profit. On his return from Italy, he lived at Constantinople, in a degree of almost regal splendour, and maintained a body of

seven thousand cavalry attached to his household.\* In an empire, where confiscation was an ordinary financial resource, and under a sovereign, whose situation rendered jealousy only common prudence, it is not surprising that the wealth of Belisarius excited the imperial cupidity, and induced Justinian to seize great part of it. The behaviour of the general under his misfortunes, and the lamentable picture of his depression which Procopius has drawn, may, perhaps, have served as the foundation for the report of his having been condemned to lose his sight. At a later period, his wealth was again confiscated on an accusation of treason, though the best authorities which we possess, assert that he was reinstated in some part of his fortune, and died in possession of his property.†

\* PROCOPIUS, *De Bell. Goth.* iii. 1.

† LORD MAHON's excellent *Life of Belisarius*, London, 1829, 8vo. has again opened the question concerning the blindness of Belisarius, and the veracity of the tale of his standing to solicit the charity of the passer-by with a wooden bowl. After all, I am inclined to think, that merely on the grounds stated by Lord Mahon, the weight of evidence is against the probability of the Romance. The age of Belisarius, Theodoric, and Chosroes, was a mythic one for the succeeding people. Belisarius was a Roman general, separated by a deep gulf of lost civilization, from all the Greek writers who mention his latter days. They are very poor historical authorities, but still I cannot agree with Lord Mahon, in placing Theophanes after John Tzetzes. After all, the question is perhaps only one of probability, as the restoration and the blindness and beggary may have been possible, though I hold the latter to be barely a possibility. I am almost inclined to infer, from the expression of Tzetzes, that all historical authority was against his tale, and that he knew he was recording a popular fable.

Ἄλλοι φασὶ τῶν χροικῶν, μὴ τυφλωθῆναι τοῦτον  
Ἐξ ἐπιτίμων δ' ἄσιμον ἐσχάτως γιγνόμεναι,  
Καὶ πάλιν εἰς ἀνάκλησιν δόξης ἰλδοῖν προτέρως.

Ch. iii. *Hist.* 88. v. 346.

I think also, that the mention of Belisarius, which is made by Justinian in an ordinance dated in 565, renders it extremely improbable that he had been

Belisarius had hardly quitted Italy when the Goths reassembled their forces. They were accustomed to rule, and nourished in the profession of arms. Justinian sent a civilian, Alexander the logothet, to govern Italy, hoping that his financial arrangements would render the new conquest a source of revenue to the imperial treasury. The fiscal administration of the new governor soon excited great discontent. He diminished the number of the Roman troops, and put a stop to those profits which a state of war usually affords the military; while, at the same time, he abolished the pensions and distributions of grain, which formed no inconsiderable portion of the revenue of the higher classes in Rome, and which had never been entirely suppressed during the Gothic domination. Alexander may have acted, in some cases, with undue severity in enforcing these measures; but it is evident, from their nature, that he must have received express orders from the emperor to put an end, to what the rapacious Justinian considered the lavish expenditure of Belisarius.

Totila had been elected king of the Goths, and had he not been opposed to the greatest men whom the declining age of the Roman empire produced, he would, probably, have succeeded in restoring the Gothic monarchy in Italy. His successes endeared him to his countrymen, while the justice of his administration, contrasted with the rapacity of the

reduced to abject misery. The phrase "*gloriosissimum Belisarium patricium contra Gothos in Italiam expeditimus*," seems to imply that Belisarius had been restored to all his honours. *Corpus Juris Civilis. Aliæ aliquot Constitutiones*, vi. *Privilegium pro Titionibus ex Cujac. obs. lib. x. cap. 12.* Tom. 2. 511. ed. st. 4to.

imperial officers, at last gained him the respect and attachment of the native provincials. He was on the point of commencing the siege of Rome, when Belisarius, who, after his departure, had served against Persia, was sent back to Italy to recover the ground already lost. The imperial forces were completely destitute of that unity and military organization, which constitute a number of different corps into one army. The various bodies of troops were commanded by officers completely independent of one another, and obedient only to Belisarius as commander-in-chief. Justinian, acting on his usual maxims of jealousy, and distrusting Belisarius more than formerly, had retained the greater part of his body-guard, and all his veteran followers, at Constantinople; so that he now appeared in Italy unaccompanied by a staff, and a body of household troops, whose experience and discipline could secure implicit obedience to his orders from the heterogeneous elements of which his army was composed. The position of the Roman general was rendered still more disadvantageous, when compared with the change that had taken place in that of his enemy. Totila was now able to command every sacrifice; for the Goths, taught by their misfortunes, and deprived of their wealth, felt the importance of union and discipline, and paid the strictest attention to the orders of their sovereign. In vain Belisarius established himself at Porto, on the mouth of the Tiber; all his endeavours to relieve Rome proved unsuccessful, and Totila became master of the city under his eye, and in spite of all his exertions.

The national and religious feelings of the orthodox

Romans, rendered them the irreconcilable enemies of the Arian Goths. Totila knew the impossibility of defending the immense extent of the fortifications of Rome, against a scientific enemy, and a hostile population, and the necessity of utterly destroying the "eternal" city, suggested itself to his mind. He commenced the destruction of the walls, but either the difficulty of completing his project, or the feelings of humanity which were inseparable from his enlightened ambition, induced him to listen to the representations of Belisarius, who conjured him to abandon his barbarous scheme of devastation. Totila, nevertheless, did every thing in his power to depopulate Rome; he compelled the inhabitants to retire into the campania, and forced the senators to abandon their native city. It is to this emigration that the utter extinction of the old Roman race and civic government must be attributed; for when Belisarius, and, at a later period, Totila himself, attempted to repeople Rome, they laid the foundations of a new society, which connects itself rather with the history of the middle ages, than with that of preceding times.

Belisarius entered the city after the departure of the Goths; and as he found it completely deserted, he had the greatest difficulty in putting it in a state of defence. But though Belisarius was enabled, by his military skill, to defend Rome against the attacks of Totila, he was unable to make any head against the Gothic army in the open field, and after vainly endeavouring to bring back victory to the Roman standards in Italy, he received permission to resign the command, and return to Constantinople. His

want of success must be attributed solely to the inadequacy of the means placed at his disposal, for encountering an active and able sovereign like Totila. The unpopularity of his second administration in Italy arose from the neglect of Justinian in paying the troops, and the necessity which that irregularity imposed on their commander, of levying heavy contributions on the Italians, while it rendered the task of enforcing strict discipline, and of protecting the property of the people from the ill paid soldiery, quite impracticable. Justice, however, requires, that we should not omit to mention, that Belisarius, though he returned to Constantinople with diminished glory, did not neglect his pecuniary interests, and came back without any diminution of his wealth.

As soon as Totila was freed from the restraint imposed on his movements by the fear of Belisarius, he quickly recovered Rome; and the loss of Italy appeared inevitable, when Justinian decided on making a new effort to retain it. As it was necessary to send a large army against the Goths, and invest the commander-in-chief with great powers, it is not probable that Justinian would have trusted any other of his generals more than Belisarius, had he not fortunately possessed an able officer, the Eunuch Narses, who could never rebel with the hope of placing the imperial crown on his own head. The assurance of his fidelity gave him great influence in the interior of the palace, and secured him a support which would never have been conceded to any other general. His military talents, and his freedom from the reproach of avarice or peculation, augmented



his personal influence, and his diligence and liberality soon assembled a powerful army. The choicest mercenary troops in the world, Huns, Heruls, Armenians, and Lombards, marched under his standard with the veteran Roman soldiers. The first object of Narses, after his arrival in Italy, was to force the Goths to risk a general engagement, trusting to the excellence of his troops, and to his own skill in the employment of their superior discipline. The rival armies met at Tagina, near Nocera, and the victory of Narses was complete.\* Totila, and six thousand Goths, perished, and Rome again fell under the dominion of Justinian. At the solicitations of the Goths, an army of Franks and Germans was permitted by Theobald, king of Astrasia, to enter Italy for the purpose of making a diversion in their favour.† Bucelin, the leader of this army, was met by Narses on the banks of the Casilinus, near Capua. The forces of the Franks consisted of thirty thousand men, those of the Romans did not exceed eighteen thousand, but the victory of Narses was so complete, that but few of the former escaped. The remaining Goths were soon destroyed, and Narses turned his whole attention to the civil government of his conquests, and to establishing security of property, and a strict administration of justice. He appears to have been a man singularly well adapted to his situation—possessing the highest military talents, combined with a perfect knowledge of the civil and financial administration; and he was consequently able to

\* GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vii. 385, note.

† Theobald reigned from A. D. 548 to 555.

estimate with exactness the sum which he could levy on the province, and remit to Constantinople, without arresting the gradual improvement of the country. His fiscal government was, nevertheless, regarded by the Italian as extremely severe, and he was unpopular with the inhabitants of Rome.

The existence of a numerous Roman population in Spain, connected with the eastern empire by the memory of ancient ties, and by active commercial relations, and of a strong orthodox feeling against the Arian Visigoths, enabled Justinian to avail himself of these advantages, in the same manner as he had done in Africa and Italy. The king Theudes had attempted to make a diversion in Africa, by besieging Ceuta, in order to call off the attention of Justinian from Italy. His attack was unsuccessful, but the circumstances were not favourable at the time for Justinian's attempting to revenge the injury.\* Dissensions in the country soon enabled him to take part in a civil war, and he seized the pretext of sending a fleet and troops to support the claims of a rebel chief, in order to secure the possession of a large portion of the south of Spain.† The rebel Athanagild, having been elected king of the Visigoths, vainly endeavoured to drive the Romans out of the provinces which they had occupied. Subsequent victories extended the conquests of the Romans from the mouth of the Tagus, from Eborā, and Corduva, along the coast of the ocean, and of the Mediterranean, almost as far as Valentia; and at

\* A. D. 545. *PROCOR. De bello Goth.* 11. c. 30.

† Agila was elected king A. D. 549; he was murdered, and the rebel Athanagild elected in 554.

times, their relations with the catholic population of the interior, enabled them to carry their arms almost into the centre of Spain.\* Of these distant conquests, the eastern empire retained possession for about sixty years.

SECTION VII. — RELATIONS OF THE NORTHERN NATIONS  
WITH THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND THE GREEK NATION.

THE reign of Justinian is remarkable for the total decline of the power of the Germanic and Gothic people on the banks of the Danube, and the establishment of the complete supremacy of the Huns, Sclavonians, and Bulgarians. The causes of this change are to be found in the same great principle which was modifying the position of the various races of mankind, in every region of the earth; in the decline of all the elements of civilization in the country immediately to the south of the Danube, in consequence of the repeated ravages to which it had been exposed; and in the impossibility of any population, not sunk very low in the scale of civil society, finding the means of subsistence in such a scene of misery. The Goths, who had once ruled all the country, from the Lake Mæotis to the Adriatic, were the first to disappear; and only a single tribe, called the Tetraxits, continued to inhabit their old seats in the Tauric Chersonese, where their descendants are supposed

\* DR JOSEPH ASCHBACH, *Geschichte der Westgothen*, p. 192. LE BEAU, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, ix. 306, — SAINT MARTIN.

to have existed until the fifteenth century.\* The Gepids, a kindred people, had defeated the Huns, and established their independence, after the death of Attila.† They obtained from Marcian the cession of a considerable district on the banks of the Danube, and an annual subsidy, in order to secure their alliance; but, in the reign of Justinian, their possessions were reduced to the territories lying between the Save and the Drave, though the alliance with the Roman empire continued in force, and they still received their subsidy.

The Heruls, a people whose connection with Scandinavia is mentioned by Procopius,‡ and who took part in some of the earliest incursions of the Gothic tribes into the empire, had, after many vicissitudes, obtained from the Emperor Anastasius a fixed settlement; and in the time of Justinian, they possessed the country to the south of the Save, and occupied the city of Singidunum, (Belgrade.) The Lombards, a Germanic people, who had once been subject to the Heruls, but who had subsequently defeated their masters, and driven them within the bounds of the empire for protection, were induced by Justinian to invade the Ostrogothic kingdom, and establish themselves in Pannonia, to the north of the Drave. They occupied the country between the Danube and the Teisse, and, like their neighbours, received an annual subsidy from the eastern empire.§ These

\* GIBBON, vii. 133, note.

† JORNANDES, *De Rebus Geticis*, xvii.

‡ PROCOPIUS, *De bello Goth.* ii. 15.

§ The Lombards are mentioned by STRABO, lib. vii. VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, ii. 106. TACITUS, *De M. G. c.* 40. *Annal.* ii. 45. PROCOPIUS, *De bello Goth.* iii. 33.

Gothic nations never formed the bulk of the population in the lands which they occupied; they were only the lords of the soil, who knew no occupations but those of war and hunting. But their successes in war, and the subsidies by which they had been enriched, had accustomed them to a degree of rude magnificence which became constantly of more difficult attainment, as their own oppressive government, and the ravages of their more barbarous neighbours, depopulated all the regions around their settlements. At last they abandoned their possessions to seek richer seats, as the Indians of the American continent quit the lands where wild game becomes rare, and plunge into new forests.

Beyond the territory of the Lombards, the country to the East was inhabited by various tribes of Slavonians, who occupied a great part of Hungary and Wallachia, and who had formed the basis of the population of many of the lands ruled by the Goths, from the earliest periods.\* The independent Slavonians were, at this time, a nation of savage robbers, in the lowest condition of social civilization, and whose ravages and incursions were rapidly tending to reduce all their neighbours to the same state of barbarism. Their plundering expeditions were chiefly directed against the rural population of the empire, and were often pushed many days' journey to the south of the Dunube. Their cruelty was dreadful; but neither their

\* We at last possess a really learned work of classic authority, accessible to the readers of German, on the subject of Slavonian history and antiquities, in the *Slavische Alterthümer*, Von P. J. Schafarik. *Deutsch. Von Mosig Von Achrenfeld*, herausgegeben Von H. Wuttke, 1. band. Leipzig, 1843, 8vo.

numbers, nor their military power excited, at this time, any alarm that they would be able to effect any permanent conquests within the bounds of the empire.

The Bulgarians, a nation of Hunnish or Finnish race, occupied the eastern parts of ancient Dacia, from the Carpathian mountains to the Dneister; and beyond them, as far as the plains to the east of the Tanais, the country was still ruled by the Huns. This people had separated into two independent kingdoms; that to the west was called the Kotigour; and the other, to the east, the Utigour. The Huns had conquered the whole Tauric Chersonese; but the cities of Cherson and Bosporus had soon thrown off their yoke, and, with the assistance of Roman garrisons, they easily defended themselves against the barbarians. The importance of the commercial relations which they kept up between the northern and southern nations, was so advantageous to all parties, that while the carrying trade of the Black Sea secured wealth and power to these distant Greek colonies, it also maintained them in possession of a considerable degree of political independence.\*

In the early part of Justinian's reign, A. D. 528, the city of Bosporus was taken and plundered by the Huns. It was soon recovered by an expedition

\* PROCOPIUS, *De bello Goth.* iv. 18. For proofs that the Huns at one time possessed all the Crimea, *De Edificiis*, iii. 7; *De bello Pers.* i. 12. That Roman garrisons occupied Cherson and Bosporus in the time of Justin, *Pers.* i. 12, and of Justinian, THEOPHANIS *Chron.* p. 159. PROCOPIUS, *De bello Pers.* i. 12, speaks of Cherson, the last city of the Roman empire, as twenty days' journey from the city of Bosporus. To what Cherson does he allude? There was a city of this name near the modern Warná. THEOPHANIS *Chron.* 153.

fitted out by the emperor at Odyssopolis, (Warna); but these repeated conquests of a mercantile emporium, and an agricultural colony, by pastoral nomads like the Huns, and by mercenary soldiers like the imperial army, must have had a very depressing effect on the prosperity of these last resorts of Greek civilization in the north. The increasing barbarism of the inhabitants of these regions, rendered the commerce, which had once flourished in these lands, but very trifling. The hordes of plundering nomads, who never remained long in one spot, had little to sell, and did not possess the means of purchasing foreign luxuries; and the language and manners of the Greeks, which had once been prevalent all around the shores of the Euxine, began from this time to fall into neglect.\* The various Greek cities which still maintained some portion of their social and municipal institutions, received many severe blows during the reign of Justinian. The towns of Kepoi and Phanagoris, situated near the Cimmerian Bosphorus, were taken by the Huns.† Sebastopolis, or Diospolis, and Pityontis, distant two days' journey from one another, on the eastern shores of the Euxine, were abandoned by their garrisons during the Colchian war; and the conquests of the Avars at last confined the influence of the Roman empire, and the trade and civilization of the Greeks, to the cities of Bosphorus and Cherson.‡

\* PROCOPIUS, *De bello Goth.* iv. 7. Ἑλληνιστικῆς αἰ ἀνδραγαθίας. AGATHIAS, l. iv. p. 108, mentions that the chiefs of the Lazes understood Greek.

† PROCOPIUS, *De bell. Goth.* iv. 5.

‡ In the reign of Tiberius the Second, (A. D. 580,) a Turkish army besieged and took Bosphorus, and established itself for some time in the Chersonesus.

It is necessary to record a few incidents to mark the progress of barbarism, poverty, and depopulation in the lands to the south of the Danube, and to explain the causes which compelled the Roman and Greek races to abandon their settlements in these countries. Though the commencement of Justinian's reign was illustrated by a signal defeat of the Antes, a powerful Sclavonian tribe, still the invasions of that people were soon renewed with all their former vigour. In the year 533, they defeated and slew Chilbudius, a Roman general of great reputation, though his name indicates his northern origin. In 538, a band of Bulgarians defeated the Roman army charged with the defence of the country, captured the general Constantiolus, and compelled him to purchase his liberty by the payment of one thousand pounds of gold, — a sum sufficient for the ransom of the flourishing city of Antioch, in the eyes of the Persian monarch Chosroes.\* In 539, the Gepids ravaged Illyria, and the Huns laid waste the whole country from the Adriatic to the long wall which protected Constantinople. Cassandra was taken, and the peninsula of Pallene plundered; the fortifications of the Thracian Chersonese were forced, and a body of the Huns crossed over the Dardanelles into Asia, while another, after ravaging Thessaly, turned Thermopylæ, and plundered Greece as far as the Isthmus of Corinth. In this expedition, the Huns are said to have collected and carried away one hundred and twenty thousand prisoners, chiefly

\* A. D. 540. Chosroes offered to leave Antioch unattacked for 1000lbs. of gold; his offer was refused, and he took the city.



belonging to the rural population of the Greek provinces.\* The fortifications erected by Justinian, and the attention which these misfortunes compelled him to pay to the efficiency of his troops on the northern frontier, restrained the incursions of the barbarians for some years after this fearful foray; but in 548, the Slavonians again ravaged Illyria to the very walls of Dyrrachium, murdering the inhabitants, or carrying away their slaves, in face of a Roman army of fifteen thousand men, unable to arrest their progress.† In 550, fresh incursions desolated Illyria and Thrace. Topirus, a flourishing city on the Egean Sea, was taken by assault, and fifteen thousand of the inhabitants were massacred, while an immense number of women and children were carried away into captivity. In 551, an eunuch named Scholasticus, who was intrusted by the defence of Thrace, was defeated by the barbarians near Adrianople. Next year, the Slavonians again entered Illyria and Thrace, and these provinces were reduced to such a state of disorder, that an exiled Lombard prince, who was dissatisfied with the rank and treatment which he had received from Justinian, taking advantage of the confusion, fled from Constantinople with a company of the imperial guards and a few of his own countrymen, and after traversing all Thrace and Illyria, plundering the country as he passed, and evading the imperial troops, at last reached the country of the Gepids in safety. Even Greece, though usually secure from its distance and its

\* PROCOPIUS, *De bello Pers.* ii. 4.

† Ibid. *De bello Goth.* iii. 29.

mountain passes, against the incursions of the northern nations, did not escape the general destruction of all which constitutes civilization. Totila despatched a fleet of three hundred vessels from Italy to ravage Corfou, and the coast of Epirus, and this expedition plundered Nicopolis and Dodona.\* To such a state was part of the country to the south of the Danube reduced, that Justinian, in order to repeople it, permitted a body of Huns to occupy permanent settlements within the empire; and thus the Roman government began to consent to replace the agricultural population of past days by a horde of nomad herdsmen, and abandoned the defence of civilization, as a vain struggle against the increasing strength of barbarism.†

The most celebrated invasion of the empire, though by no means the most destructive, was that of Zabergan, the king of the Kutigour Huns, who crossed the Danube in the year 559. Its historical fame is derived from its success in approaching the wall of Constantinople, and because its defeat was the last military exploit of Belisarius. Zabergan had divided his army into three divisions, and he found the country every where so destitute of defence, that he ventured to advance on the capital with one division, which amounted to seven thousand men. After all the lavish and injudicious expenditure of Justinian, in building forts, and erecting fortifications, he had allowed the long wall of Anastasius to fall into such a state of delapidation, that Zabergan passed it without difficulty, and advanced to within

\* PROCOPIUS, *De bello Goth.* iv. 22.

† Ibid. iv. 27.

fifteen miles of Constantinople, before he encountered any serious resistance. Belisarius was then called from his retirement, and easily drove back the Huns, who withdrew to Arcadiopolis, on Mount Rhodope. The modern historian must be afraid of conveying a false impression of the weakness of the empire, and of the neglect of the government, if he venture to transcribe the ancient accounts of this expedition; yet the miserable picture which is drawn of the close of Justinian's reign, is supported by the history of the misfortunes of his successors. As the wars with the Persians and Goths had ceased, the empire was in a state of peace, and yet the military forces of Justinian, whose reign had been distinguished by many distant conquests, which his armies still garrisoned, were insufficient to protect the roads to the capital, and the country in the immediate vicinity of his palace.

The division of the Huns sent against the Thracian Chersonese was as unsuccessful as the main body of the army. But while the Huns were incapable of forcing the wall which defended the isthmus, they so utterly despised the Roman garrison, that six hundred ventured to embark on rafts, in order to paddle round the fortifications. The Byzantine general possessed twenty galleys, and with this naval force he easily destroyed all the Huns who had ventured to sea. A well-timed sally on the barbarians who had witnessed the destruction of their comrades, routed the remainder, and shewed them that their contempt of the Roman soldiery had been carried too far. The third division of the Huns had been ordered to advance through Mace-

donia and Thessaly. It had penetrated, in fact, as far as Thermopylæ, but it was not very successful in collecting plunder, and retreated with as little glory as the other two.

Justinian, who had seen a barbarian, at the head of an army of twenty thousand men, ravage a considerable portion of his empire, instead of pursuing and crushing the invader, engaged the king of the Utigour Huns, by a lavish employment of promises and money, to attack Zabergan. These intrigues were successful, and the dissensions of the two monarchs prevented the Huns from again attacking the empire. In a few years after, Avars invaded Europe, and by subduing both the Hunnish kingdoms, gave the Roman emperor a far more dangerous and powerful neighbour, than had lately threatened his northern frontier.

The Turks and the Avars become politically known to the Greeks, for the first time, towards the end of Justinian's reign. Since that period the Turks have always continued to occupy a memorable place in the history of mankind, as the destroyers of ancient civilization. In their progress towards the West, they were preceded by the Avars, a people, whose arrival in Europe produced the greatest alarm, whose dominion was soon widely extended, but whose complete extermination, or amalgamation with their subjects, leaves the history of their race a problem never likely to receive a very satisfactory solution. The Avars are supposed to have been a portion of the inhabitants of a powerful Asiatic empire, which figures in the annals of China as ruling a great part of the centre of Asia, and

extending to the Gulf of Corea. The noblest caste of the ruling race of the Avars may perhaps have belonged to the same family as the Asiatic Scythians, if the testimony of Theophylactus Simocatta, as to their Scythian origin, be admitted literally,—a testimony which derives strong support from the fact mentioned by Menander, that the Turks, who had been the subjects of these Avars, made use of the Scythian characters in their written communications with Justinian.\* The great empire of the Avars was overthrown by a rebellion of their Turkish subjects, and the noblest caste soon became lost to history, amidst the revolutions of the Chinese empire.

The original seats of the Turks were in the country round the great chain of Mount Altai. As subjects of the Avars, they had been distinguished by their skill in working and tempering iron; their industry had procured them wealth, and wealth had inspired them with the desire for independence. After throwing off the yoke of the Avars, they waged war with that people until they destroyed the Avar empire, and compelled the military strength of the nation to fly before them in two separate bodies. One of these divisions fell back on China; the other advanced into western Asia, and at last entered Europe. The Turks extended their conquests, and in a few years their dominions extended from the Wolga, and the Caspian Sea, to the shores of the ocean, or the Sea of Japan, and from the banks

\* THEOPH. SIM. vii. 8. MENANDER, p. 298, ed. Bonn. For historical information on the Scythian race, see SCHAFARIK's *Slavishe Alterthümer*, p. 267. But the ruling race of the Asiatic Scythians may have been of some foreign stock, and used its own native language and letters.

of the Oxus (Gihoun) to the deserts of Siberia. The western army of the Avars, increased by many tribes who feared the Turkish government, advanced into Europe as a nation of conquerors, and not as a band of fugitives. The mass of this army is supposed to have been composed of people of the Hunnish or Finnish race, because the people who afterwards bore the Avar name in Europe seem to have belonged to that family. It must not, however, be forgotten, that even the mighty army of the Avars might easily, in a few generations, lose all national peculiarities, and forget its native language, amidst the greater number of its Hunnish subjects, even if we should suppose the two races to have been derived from totally different stocks, if the state of their mutual civilization allowed them to mix together in social life. The Avars, however, are sometimes styled Turks, even by the earliest historians, apparently from their making use of the term in the vague manner in which the ancients applied the appellation of Scythian, and the moderns that of Tartar, to all the nomad nations from the same countries. The use of the appellation Turk, in an extended sense, is found in Theophylactus Simocatta, a writer possessing considerable knowledge of the affairs of eastern Asia, and who speaks of the inhabitants of the flourishing kingdom of Taugus as Turks.\* This application of the term appears to have arisen from the circumstance, that the part of China to which he alluded, had been subject, at the time, to a foreign, or in his phrase, a Turkish dynasty.

\* THEOPH. SIM. vii. 7. "Ἐθνὸς ἁλκιμώτατον καὶ πολυανδρωπύτατον καὶ τοῖς κατὰ τὴν ἡκουμένην ἰθυσί, διὰ το μίγνυες, ἀπαράλληλον.

The Avars, after they had entered Europe, soon conquered all the countries to the banks of the Danube, and before Justinian's death, they were firmly established, as far west as the borders of Pannonia. Their pursuers, the Turks, did not visit Europe until a later period; but they extended their conquests in central Asia, where they destroyed the kingdom of the Hephthalite Huns to the east of Persia, a part of which Chosroes had already subdued. They engaged in long wars with the Persians; but it is sufficient to pass over the history of the first Turkish empire with this slight notice, as it exercised but a very trifling direct influence on the fortunes of the Greek nation. The wars of the Turks and Persians tended, however, greatly to weaken the Persian empire, to reduce its resources, and increase the oppression of the internal administration, by the call for extraordinary exertions, and thus prepared the way for the easier conquest of the country by the followers of Mohammed.

The sudden appearance of the Avars and Turks in history, marks the singular void which a long period of vicious government had created, in regions which were once populous and flourishing. Both occupied an important position in the destruction of the frame of ancient society in Europe and Asia; but neither of them contributed any thing to the reorganization of the political, social, or religious condition of the modern world. Both empires soon fell to decay, and the very nations were almost lost to history. The Avars, after having attempted the conquest of Constantinople, became at last extinct, and the Turks, after having been long forgotten, slowly rose to

a high degree of power, and at length achieved the conquest which their ancient rivals had vainly attempted.

SECTION VIII.—RELATIONS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE  
WITH PERSIA.

THE Asiatic frontier of the Roman empire was less favourable for attack than defence. The range of Caucasus was occupied, as it still is, by a cluster of small nations of various languages, strongly attached to their independence, which the nature of their country enabled them to maintain, amidst the wars and conflicting negotiations of the Romans, Persians, and Huns, by whom they were surrounded. The kingdom of Calchis (Mingrelia) was a state in permanent alliance with the Romans, and the sovereign was a tributary, who received a regular investiture from the emperor. The Tzans, who inhabited the mountains about the sources of the Phasis, enjoyed a subsidiary alliance with Justinian, until their plundering expeditions, within the precincts of the empire, induced him to garrison their country. Iberia, to the east of Colchis, almost the modern Georgia, formed an independent kingdom under the protection of Persia.

Armenia, as an independent kingdom, had long formed a slight counterpoise between the Roman and Persian empires. In the reign of Theodosius the Second, it had been partitioned by its powerful neighbours; and about the year 429, it had lost the shadow of independence, which it had been allowed



to retain. The greater part of Armenia had fallen to the share of the Persians; but, as the people were Christians, and possessed their own church and literature, they had maintained their nationality uninjured, after the loss of their political government. The western, or Roman part of Armenia, was bounded by the mountains in which the Araxes, the Boas, and the Euphrates take their rise; and it was defended against Persia by the fortress of Theodosiopolis, (Erzeroam,) situated on the very frontier of Pers-Armenia.\* From Theodosiopolis the empire was bounded by ranges of mountains which cross the Euphrates, and extend to the River Nymphæus, and here the city of Martyropolis, the capital of Roman Armenia, east of the Euphrates, was situated.† From the junction of the Nymphæus with the Tigris, the frontier again followed the mountains to Dara, and from thence it proceeded to the Chaboras, and the fortress of Kirkesium.

The Arabs or Saracens, who inhabited the district between Kirkesium and Idumæa, were divided into two kingdoms,—that of Ghassan, towards Syria, maintained an alliance with the Romans; and that of Hira, to the east, enjoyed the protection of Persia. Palmyra, which had fallen into ruins after the time of Theodosius the Second, was repaired and garrisoned;‡ and the country between the Gulfs of Ailath and Suez, forming a province called

\* SAINT MARTIN. *Mémoires Historiques et Géographiques sur l'Arménie*, i. 67.

† This was called the Fourth Armenia. *Justiniani Nov.* xxxi.

‡ MALALÉ *Ch.* pr. ii. p. 53. ed. Venet.

the Third Palestine, was protected by a fortress constructed at the foot of Mount Sinai, and occupied by a strong body of troops.\*

Such a frontier, though it presented great difficulties in the way of invading Persia, afforded admirable means for protecting the empire; and, accordingly, it had very rarely, indeed, happened, that a Persian army had ever penetrated into a Roman province. It was reserved for Justinian's reign to behold the Persians contribute to the ruin of the wealth, and the destruction of the civilization, of some of the most flourishing and enlightened portions of the eastern empire. The wars which Justinian carried on with Persia, reflect little glory on his reign; but the celebrated name of his rival, the great Chosroes Nushirvan, has rendered his misfortunes and misconduct venial in the eyes of historians. The Persian and Roman empires were, at this time, nearly equal in power and civilization: both were ruled by princes whose reigns form national epochs; yet history affords ample evidence, that the brilliant exploits of both these sovereigns were effected by a wasteful expenditure of the national resources, and by a consumption of the capital of their empires, which proved irremediable. The inhabitants of neither empires were ever able to regain their former state of prosperity, nor could society recover the shock which it had received; as the governments were too demoralized to venture on a political reform, and the people too ignorant, and too feeble, to attempt a national revolution.

\* PROCOPIUS, *Ædific.* v. 8. LE BRAU, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, viii. 115.

The governments of declining countries, often give but slight signs of their weakness and approaching dissolution, as long as the ordinary relations of war and peace require to be maintained only with habitual friends or enemies, though the slightest exertion, created by extraordinary circumstances, may cause the political fabric to fall to pieces. The armies of the eastern empire, and of Persia, had, by long acquaintance with the military force of one another, found the means of balancing any peculiar advantage of their enemy, by a modification of tactics, or by an improvement in military discipline, which neutralized its effect. War between the two states was consequently carried on, according to a regular routine of service, and was continued during a succession of campaigns, in which much blood and treasure were expended, and much glory gained, with very little change in the relative military power, and none in the frontiers, of the two empires.

The avarice of Justinian, or his inconstant plans, often induced him to leave the eastern frontier of the empire very inadequately garrisoned; and this frontier presented an extent of country, against which a Persian army, concentrated behind the Tigris, could choose its point of attack. The option of carrying the war into Syria, Mesopotamia, Armenia, or Colchis, generally lay with the Persians; and Chosroes attempted to penetrate into the empire by every portion of this frontier during his long wars. The Roman army, in spite of the change which had taken place in its arms and organization, still retained its superiority in discipline and tactics.

The war, in which Justinian found the empire engaged on his succession, was terminated by a peace, which the Romans purchased by the payment of eleven thousand pounds of gold to Chosroes. The Persian monarch required peace to regulate the affairs of his own kingdom; and the calculation of Justinian, that the sum which he paid to Persia, was much less than the expense of continuing the war, though correct, was injudicious, as it really conveyed an admission of inferiority and weakness. Justinian's object had been, to place the great body of his military forces at liberty, in order to direct his exclusive attention to recovering the lost provinces of the western empire. Had he availed himself of peace with Persia, to diminish the burdens on his subjects, and consolidate the defence of his frontiers, instead of extending them, he might, perhaps, have re-established the power of the Roman empire. As soon as Chosroes heard of the conquests of Justinian in Africa, Sicily, and Italy, his jealousy induced him to renew the war. The solicitations of the embassy sent by Witiges, are said to have had some effect in determining him to take up arms.

Belisarius served against the Persians in this war, as he had done in the former; but he was ill supported, and his success was by no means brilliant. The fact that he saved Syria from utter devastation, nevertheless rendered his campaign of 543 by no means unimportant for the empire. This war was carried on for twenty years, but during the latter period of its duration, military operations were confined to Colchis. It was terminated in 562, by a truce for fifty years, which effected little change in

the frontiers of the empire. The most remarkable clause of this treaty of peace, imposed on Justinian the disgraceful obligation of paying Chosroes an annual subsidy of thirty thousand pieces of gold; and he was compelled immediately to advance the sum of two hundred and ten thousand, to pay for seven years. The sum, it is true, was not very great, but the condition of the Roman empire was sadly changed, when it became necessary to purchase peace from all its neighbours with gold, and with gold to find mercenary troops to carry on its wars. The moment, therefore, a supply of gold failed, the safety of the Roman power was compromised.

The weakness of the Roman empire, and the necessity of finding allies in the East, in order to secure a share of the lucrative commerce, of which Persia had long possessed a monopoly, induced Justinian to keep up friendly communications with the king of Ethiopia, (Abyssinia.) Elesboas, who then occupied the Ethiopian throne, was a prince of great power, and a steady ally of the Romans. The wars of this Christian monarch in Arabia, are related by the historians of the empire; and Justinian endeavoured, by his means, to transfer the silk trade with India, from Persia, to the route by the Red Sea. The attempt failed, from the great length of the sea voyage, and the difficulties of adjusting the intermediate commerce of the countries, on this line of communication; but still the trade of the Red Sea was so great, that the king of Ethiopia, in the reign of Justin, was able to collect a fleet of seven hundred native vessels, and six hundred Roman and Persian merchantmen, which he employed to transport his

troops into Arabia.\* The diplomatic relations of Justinian, with the Avars and Turks, and particularly with the latter nation, were influenced by the position of the Roman empire with regard to Persia, both in a commercial and political point of view.†

SECTION IX. — TRADE AND COMMERCIAL POSITION OF THE GREEKS, AND COMPARATIVE CONDITION WITH THE OTHER NATIONS LIVING UNDER THE ROMAN GOVERNMENT.

UNTIL the northern nations conquered the southern provinces of the western empire, the commerce of Europe was in the hands of the subjects of the Roman emperors; and the monopoly of the Indian trade, its most lucrative branch, was almost exclusively possessed by the Greeks.‡ But the invasions of the barbarians, by diminishing the wealth of the countries which they subdued, greatly diminished the demand for the valuable merchandize imported from the East; and the financial extortions of the imperial government gradually impoverished the Greek population of Syria, Egypt, and Cyrenaïca, the greater portion of which had derived its prosperity from this now declining trade. In order to comprehend fully the change which must have

\* LE BEAU, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, viii. 60.

† THEOPHANIS *Ch.* 196. MALALE *Ch. Pars.* 2. p. 81, ed. Venet. MENANDER, *exc. leg.* p. 282. ed. Bonn. THEOPHANIS *Ch.* 203.

‡ "Minimaque computatione millies centena millia sestertiūm annis omnibus India et Seres, peninsulaque illa, Arabia, imperio nostro adimunt, tanto nobis deliciæ et feminae constant." PLINII *Hist. Nat.* lib. xii c. xviii.

taken place in the commercial relations of the Greeks with the western portion of Europe, it is only necessary to compare the situation of each province, in the reign of Justinian, with its condition in the time of Hadrian. Many countries which had once supported an extensive trade in articles of luxury imported from the East, became incapable of purchasing any foreign production, and could hardly supply a diminished and impoverished population with the mere necessities of life.\* The wines of Chios, Samos, Cyprus, Lesbos, Smyrna, Tripolis, Berytes, and Tyre; the woollen cloths of Miletus and Laodicea, the purple dresses of Tyre, Getulia, and Laconia, the cambric of Cos, the manuscripts of Egypt and Pergamus, the perfumes, spices, pearls, and jewels of India, the ivory, the slaves, and tortoiseshell of Africa, and the silks of China, were once abundant on the banks of the Rhine, and in the north of Britain. Treves and York were long wealthy and flourishing cities, where every foreign luxury and enjoyment could be obtained. Money then circulated freely, and trade was carried on with activity, far beyond the limits of the empire. The Greeks who traded in amber and fur, though they may have rarely visited the northern countries in person, maintained constant communications with these distant lands, and paid for the commodities which they imported, by inducing the barbarians to consume the luxuries, the spices, and the incense of the East. Nor was the trade in statues, pictures,

\* "Ex immensis opibus egentissima est tandem Romana Respublica, impetitum aerarium est, urbes exinanitæ, populatæ provinciæ." AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS, xxiv. c. 3.

vases, and objects of art in marble, metals, earthenware, ivory, and painting, a trifling branch of commerce, as it may be conjectured from the relics which are now so frequently found, after having remained concealed for ages beneath the soil.

In the time of Justinian, Britain, Gaul, Rhætia, Panonia, Noricum, and Vindelicia, were reduced to such a state of poverty and desolation, that their foreign commerce was almost annihilated, and even their internal trade was often reduced to a trifling exchange of the rudest commodities. Even the south of Gaul, Spain, Italy, Africa, and Sicily, had suffered a great decrease of population and wealth under the government of the Goths and Vandals; and though their cities still carried on a considerable commerce with the East, that commerce was very much less than it had been in the times of the empire.\* As the greater part of the trade of the Mediterranean was in the hands of the Greeks, the interest of their trade gave a peculiar character to a large portion of the Greek population, and this population was often regarded in the West as the type of the inhabitants of the eastern Roman empire. The mercantile class was generally regarded by the barbarians, as favouring the Roman cause; and probably not without reason, as their interests must have required them to keep up constant communications with the empire. When Belisarius touched at Sicily, on his way to attack the Vandals, Procopius found a friend at Syracuse, who was a

\* Vides universa Italiæ loca originariis viduata cultoribus, et illa mater humanæ messis Liguria, cui numerosa agricolarum solebat constare progenies, orbata atque sterilis jejunum cespitem nostris monstrat obtutibus." EUNODIUS, v. *St Epiph. Opera*, ed. J. Sismondi. Paris, 1611, p. 358.



merchant, carrying on extensive dealings in Africa, as well as with the East. The Vandals, when they were threatened by Justinian's expedition, threw many of the merchants of Carthage into prison, as they suspected them of favouring Belisarius. The laws adopted by the barbarians for regulating the trade of their native subjects,\* and the dislike with which most of the Gothic nations viewed trade, manufactures, and commerce, naturally placed all the commercial and money transactions in the hands of strangers. When it happened that war or policy excluded the Greeks from participating in these transactions, they were entirely conducted by the Jews. We find, indeed, from the fall of the western empire, that the Jews, availing themselves of their commercial knowledge, and neutral political character, began to be very numerous in all the countries gained by conquest from the Romans, and particularly so, in those situated on the Mediterranean, which, from their position, maintained constant communications with the East.

Several circumstances, however, during the reign of Justinian, contributed to augment the commercial transactions of the Greeks, and to give them a

\* "Prætia debent communi deliberatione constitui : quia non est delectatio commercii quæ jubetur invitâ." Sartorius, in citing this passage from a letter of King Athalaric, addressed to Gildia, comte of Syracuse, observes very justly, "J'entends par les mots *deliberatio communis*, non pas ce dont les acheteurs et vendeurs conviennent entre eux, ce qui serait un commerce libre ; mais comme il est prouvé par tout ce qui précède, une vente et un achat d'après les prix fixés d'un commun accord entre le magistrat, l'évêque et le peuple, ce qui est précisément le contraire." See CASSIODORI *Varia*, xi. 14. SARTORIUS, *Essai sur l'état civil et politique des peuples d'Italie, sous la gouvernement des Goths*, 333.

decided preponderance in the eastern trade. The long war with Persia cut off all those routes by which the Syrian and Egyptian population had maintained their ordinary communications with Persia; and it was from Persia that they had always drawn their silk, and the greater part of their Indian commodities, such as muslins and jewels. This trade now began to seek two different channels, by both of which it avoided the dominions of Chosroes; the one was to the north of the Caspian Sea, and the other through Arabia, from the shores of the Persian Gulf, and also by the Red Sea. The importance of the northern route, and the extent of the trade carried on by it through different ports on the Black Sea, are authenticated by the numerous colony of the inhabitants of central Asia, who had established it at Constantinople, in the reign of Justin the Second. Six hundred Turks availed themselves, at one time, of the security offered by the journey of a Roman ambassador, sent by that emperor to the great Khan of the Turks, by joining his train.\* This fact affords the strongest evidence of the great importance of this route, as there can be no question that the great number of the inhabitants of central Asia, who visited Constantinople, were attracted to it by their commercial occupations.

The Indian commerce through Arabia and by the Red Sea, was also very important; much more so, indeed, than the mere mention of Justinian's failure to establish a regular importation of silk by this

\* MENANDER, p. 398, ed. Bonn.

route might lead us to suppose, or than we might be inclined to infer from the records which we possess of the political and military transactions of the Persian and Ethiopian empires. The immense number of trading vessels which habitually frequented the Red Sea, shews that the trade was very great.

It is true, that the population of Arabia now first began to share its profits and feel its influence, but these must have been great, as the spirit of improvement and inquiry, which the excitement incident to this new field of enterprize, and the new subjects for thought which it opened, prepared the children of the desert for national union, and awakened the impulse which gave birth to the character of Mahommed.

As the whole trade of western Europe, in Chinese and Indian productions, passed through the hands of the Greeks, its amount, though small in any one district, yet as a whole must have been large. It is not to be forgotten, that as the Greek mercantile population of the eastern empire had declined, though perhaps not yet in the same proportion as the other classes, the relative importance of the trade remained as great as ever, with regard to the general wealth of the empire; and its profits were probably greater than formerly, since the restricted nature of the transactions, in the various localities, must have discouraged competitors, and produced the effects of a monopoly. Justinian was also fortunate enough to secure to the Greeks the complete control of the silk trade, by enabling them to share in the production and manufacture of this precious commodity. This trade had excited the attention of the Romans at

an early period, and one of the emperors, probably Marcus Aurelius, had sent an ambassador to the East, with the view of establishing commercial relations with the country where silk was produced, and this ambassador succeeded in reaching China.\* Justinian long attempted in vain to open direct communications with China; but all his efforts to obtain a direct supply of silk either proved unavailing, or were attended with very partial success.† The people of the Roman empire were compelled to purchase the greater part of their silk from the Persians, who alone were able to supply the Chinese and Indian markets with the commodities suitable for that distant market. The Persians were, however, unable to secure to themselves the monopoly of this profitable commerce; for the high price of silk in the West, engaged the nations of central Asia to avail themselves of every opportunity of opening direct communications by land with China, and conveying it, by caravans, to the frontiers of the Roman empire. This trade followed various channels, according to the security which political circumstances afforded to the traders, and at times it was directed towards the frontiers of Armenia, while, at others, it proceeded as far north as the Sea of Asof. Jornandes, in speaking of Cherson at this time, calls it a city whence the merchant imports the produce of Asia.‡

At a moment when Justinian must almost have

\* GIBBON, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vii. 97. LE BEAU, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, ix. 222. SAINT MARTIN.

† PROCOPIUS, *De bello Pers.* i. 20.

‡ JORNANDES, *De rebus Geticis*, c. ii. "Juxta Chersonem, quo Asiæ bona avidus mercator importat."

abandoned the hope of participating in the direct trade with China, he was fortunate enough to be put in possession of the means of cultivating silk in his own dominions. Christian missions had been the means of extending very widely the benefits of civilization. Christian missionaries first maintained a regular communication between Ethiopia and the Roman empire, and they had frequently visited China.\* In the year 551, two monks, who had studied the method of rearing silk-worms, and winding silk, in China, succeeded in conveying a number of the eggs of the moth to Constantinople, enclosed in a cane. The emperor, delighted with the acquisition, granted them every assistance which they required, and encouraged their undertaking with great zeal. It would not, therefore, be just to deny to Justinian some share in the merit of having founded a flourishing branch of trade, which tended very materially to support the resources of the eastern empire, and to enrich the Greek nation for several centuries.

The Greeks, at this time, maintained a superiority over the other people in the empire, chiefly by their commercial enterprise, which continued to preserve a degree of civilization in the trading cities, which was rapidly disappearing among the whole agricultural population. The Greeks, in general, were now almost on the same level with the Syrian, Egyptian, Armenian, and Jewish people. The Greeks in Cyrenæica, and the Egyptians in their native land, had suffered from the same government,

\* *Versuch einer allgemeinen Missions Geschichte der Kirche von Blumhardt.* BASEL. b. iii. s. 40. An interesting work.

and declined in the same proportion. Of the decline of Egypt we possess exact information, which it may not be unprofitable to pass in review. In the reign of Augustus, Egypt furnished Rome with a tribute of twenty million of modii of grain annually,\* and it was garrisoned, in ordinary circumstances, by a force rather exceeding twelve thousand regular troops.† Under Justinian, the tribute in grain was reduced to about five millions and a half modii, that is 800,000 artabas, and the Roman troops, to a cohort of six hundred men.‡ There can be little doubt, that even the reduced production, and diminished prosperity of Egypt, were prevented from sinking still lower, by the exportation of a portion of its grain to supply the trading population on the shores of the Red Sea. We may infer, also, from this circumstance, that the canal connecting the Nile with the Red Sea, the great artery which circulated the eastern grain, and one of the anchors, as it were, of civilization in Egypt, was still in a state of active employment.

About this period the Jewish nation attained a degree of importance which is worthy of attention, as explaining many circumstances connected with the history of the human race. It appears unquestionable, that the Jews had increased very much in the age

\* AURELIUS VICTOR, ep. c. 1, "Ducenties centena millia modiorum."

† More, certainly, under Augustus; but under Tiberius, Nero, and Vespasian, the garrison was two legions. TACITUS, *Ann.* 4. 5. JOSEPHUS, *Bell. Jud.* ii. 16. 4. TACITUS, *Hist.* ii. 16. VARGES, *De statu Egypti* 69.

‡ JUSTINIAN, *Edict.* xiii. Ptolemy Philadelphus had only received 1,500,000 artabas of grain as tribute, but he received a money revenue of 14,800 talents, about L.2,500,000 sterling, and Egypt was now incapable of making any such payments. The customs of its ports, and the taxes of its towns, must have formed a comparatively small sum.

immediately preceding Justinian's reign. This increase is to be accounted for by the decline of the rest of the population in countries round the Mediterranean, and the general decay of civilization. These circumstances afforded an opening for the Jews, whose social position, as a persecuted people, had been previously so bad, that the decline of their neighbours, at least, afforded them some relative improvement. The Jews, too, at this period, were the only neutral nation who could carry on their trade equally with the Persians, Ethiopians, Arabs, and Goths; for, though they were hated every where, the universal dislike was a reason for tolerating a people never likely to form a common cause with any other. In Gaul, Italy, and Spain, they had risen to considerable importance; and in Spain in particular, they carried on an extensive commerce, and established a trade in slaves, which excited the indignation of the Christian church, and which kings and ecclesiastical councils vainly endeavoured to destroy. The Jews generally found support from the barbarian monarchs; and Theodoric the Great granted them every species of protection. Their alliance was often necessary to render the country independent of the funds and commerce of the Greeks.\*

To commercial jealousy, therefore, as well as religious zeal, we must attribute some of the persecutions which the Jews sustained in the eastern empire. The conduct of the Roman government awakened that bitter nationality, and revengeful hatred of their enemies, which have always marked

\* *Ed. Theod.* art. 143. *Cassiod. Var.* iv. ep. 33, v. 37.

the energetic character of the Israelites; but the history of the injustice of one party, and of the crimes of the other, does not fall within the scope of this inquiry.

The Greeks and Jews were at this period the most commercial people in the empire. The Armenians, who at present take a large share in the trade of the East, were then entirely occupied with war and religion, and appeared in Europe only as mercenary soldiers in the pay of Justinian, in whose service many attained the highest military rank. In civilization and literary attainments, the Armenians held, however, as high a rank as any of their contemporaries. In the year 551, their patriarch, Moses the Second, assembled a number of their learned men, in order to reform their calendar; and they then fixed on the era which the Armenians have since continued to use.\* It is true, that the numerous translations of Greek books which distinguished the literature of Armenia, were chiefly made during the preceding century, for the sixth only produced a few ecclesiastical works. The literary energy of Armenia is remarkable, inasmuch as it excited the fears of the Persian monarch, who ordered that no Armenian should visit the empire to study at the Greek universities of Constantinople, Athens, or Alexandria.

The literature of the Greek language ceased, from this time, to possess a national character, and became more identified with the government and governing classes of the eastern empire, and with the orthodox

\* SAINT MARTIN, *Mémoires sur l'Arménie*, i. 330. C. F. NEUMANN, *Versuch einer Geschichte der Armenischen Literatur*, Leipzig, 1836, 8vo. p. 92.



church, than with the inhabitants of Greece. The fact is easily explained by the poverty of the native Hellenes, and by the position of the ruling caste in the Roman empire. The highest offices in the court, in the civil administration, and in the orthodox church, were filled with this Greco-Roman class; and this class sprung originally from the Macedonian conquerors of Asia, and now, proud of the Roman name, repudiated all idea of Greek nationality; and, from its political views of Roman dominion, affected to treat Greek national distinctions as mere provincialism, at the very time it was acting under the impulse of Greek prejudices, both in the state and the church. The long existence of the new Platonic school of philosophy at Athens, seems to have been connected with Hellenic national feelings, and Justinian was doubtless induced to put an end to it, and drive its last teachers into banishment, from his hostility to all independent institutions. This Greek nationality also indicates the natural cause of the dissatisfaction of the Athenian philosophers during their residence in Persia. They fled from the persecutions of Justinian to the court of Chosroes; but in spite of the favourable reception which they received, as enemies of the Roman emperor and of Christianity, after a few years they returned to their Greek countrymen.\* With this dispersion of the philosophers, the national literature of Greece ended.

\* Their names were Diogenes, Hermias, Eulalius, Priscianus, Damascius, and Simplicius; at the same time Salustius, the Syrian cynic, and Isidorus, the Platonic professor of Alexandria, also retired to the Persian court, and returned with their friends.

The universities of the other cities of the empire were either intended for the education of the higher classes destined for the public administration, or for the church. That of Constantinople possessed a philosophical, philological, legal, and theological faculty. Alexandria added to these a celebrated medical school. Berytus was distinguished for its school of jurisprudence, and Edessa was remarkable for its Syriac, as well as its Greek faculties. The university of Antioch suffered a severe blow in the destruction of the city by Chosroes, but it again rose from its ruin. The Greek poetical literature of this age is utterly destitute of popular interest, and shews that it formed only the amusement of a class of society, not the portrait of a nation's feelings. Paul the *Silentiary*, and Agathias the historian, wrote many epigrams, which exist in the Anthology. The poem of Hero and Leander by Musæus, is generally supposed to have been composed about the year 450, but it may be mentioned as one of the last Greek poems which displays a true Greek character; and it is peculiarly valuable, as affording us a testimony of the late period to which the Hellenic people preserved their correct taste. The poems of Coluthus and Tryphiodorus, which are almost of the same period, are very far inferior in merit; but as both were Egyptian Greeks, it is not surprising that their poetical productions display the frigid character of the artificial school.

The prose literature of the sixth century can boast of some distinguished names. The commentary of Simplicius on the manual of Epictetus has

been frequently printed, and the work has even been translated into German. Simplicius was a pupil of Damascius, and one of the philosophers who, with that celebrated teacher, visited Persia on the dispersion of the Athenian schools. The collection of Stobæus, even in the mutilated form in which we possess it, is not without interest; the medical works of Actius and Alexander of Tralles have been printed several times, and the geographical writings of Hierocles and Cosmas Indicopleustes possess considerable interest. In history, the writings of Procopius and Agathias are of great merit, and have been translated into several modern languages. Many other names of authors, whose works have been preserved in part and in modern times, might be cited; but it does not belong to our inquiry to enter more into details, which will be found in the history of Greek literature, nor does it fall within our province to signalize any of the legal and ecclesiastical writers of the age.\*

SECTION X.—INFLUENCE OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH  
IN SUPPORTING THE NATIONAL FEELINGS OF THE  
GREEKS.

It is necessary here to advert to the effect which the existence of the established church, as a constituted body, and forming a part of the state, produced both on the government and on the people;

\* *Geschichte der Griechischen Literatur*, a German translation, by J. SCHWARGE and DR PINDER, of SCHOELL's *Histoire de la Littérature Grecque*. The French original is in 8 vols. 8vo.; the German translation in 3 vols.

though it will only be to notice its connection with the Greeks as a nation. The political connection of the church with the state, displayed its evil effects, by the active part which the clergy took in exciting the numerous persecutions which distinguish this period. Indeed, the alliance of Justinian and the Roman government of his time with the orthodox church, was forced on the parties by their political position. Their interests in Africa, Italy, and Spain, identified the imperial party and the orthodox believers, and invited the use of arms as the arbiter of opinions. It became, or was thought necessary at times, even within the limits of the empire, to unite political and ecclesiastical power in the same hands; and the union of the office of prefect and patriarch of Egypt, in the person of Apollinarius, is a memorable instance. To the combination, therefore, of motives of Roman policy with feelings of orthodox bigotry, we must attribute the religious persecutions of the Arians, Nestorians, and Eutychians, as well as of Platonic philosophers, Manichæans, Samaritans, Jews, and all other heretics. The various laws which Justinian enacted to enforce unity of opinion in religions, and to punish any difference of belief from that of the established church, occupy a considerable space in his legislation; yet, as if to shew the impossibility of fixing opinions with perfect certainty, it appeared at the end of his reign, that this most orthodox of Roman emperors, and munificent patron of the church, held that the body of Jesus was incorruptible, and adopted a heterodox interpretation of the Nicene creed, in denying the two natures of Christ.

The religious persecutions of Justinian tended, in a very great degree, to ripen the general feelings of dissatisfaction with the Roman government, which were universal in the provinces, into feelings of permanent hostility, in all those portions of the empire in which the heretics formed the majority of the population. The orthodox church, unfortunately, rather exceeded the common measure of bigotry and ecclesiastical violence in this age; and it was too closely connected with the Greek nation, for the spirit of persecution not to acquire a national as well as a religious character. The established church was identified with the Greek clergy; for as Greek was the language of the civil and ecclesiastical administration, the Greeks, or those acquainted with the Greek language, could alone attain the highest ecclesiastical preferments. The jealousy of the Greeks was sure to raise among the orthodox a suspicion of all their rivals, in order to exclude them for the envied promotion; and, consequently, the Syrians, Egyptians, and Armenians, found themselves placed in opposition to the Greeks, by their national language and literature.

The Scriptures had, at a very early period, been translated into all the spoken languages of the East; and the Syrians, Egyptians, and Armenians, not only made use of their own language in the service of the church, but also possessed, at this time, a provincial clergy, in no ways inferior to the Greek provincial clergy in learning and piety, and, in ecclesiastical literature, fully equal to that portion of the Greek ecclesiastical literature which was accessible to the mass of the people. This use of

the national language gave the church of each province a national character; the opposition which political circumstances created against the established church, gave it a heretical tinge; and a strong disposition to quarrel with the Greek church had always displayed itself among the natives of Egypt. Justinian carried his persecutions so far, that, in several provinces, the natives separated from the established church, and elected their own bishops, an act which, in the society of the time, was a near approach to open rebellion. Indeed, the hostility to the Roman government throughout the East, was every where connected with an opposition to the Greek clergy. The Jews revived an old saying, indicating a national, as well as political and religious animosity,—“Cursed is he who eateth swine’s flesh, or teacheth his child Greek.”\*

Power, whether ecclesiastical or civil, is so liable to abuse, that it is not surprising that the Greeks, as soon as they had succeeded in transforming the established church of the Roman empire into the Greek church, should have acted unfairly to the provincial clergy of the eastern provinces of the empire, in which the Greek liturgy was not used; nor is it surprising that the national differences should have soon been identified with opposite opinions in points of doctrine. As soon as any question arose, the Greek clergy, from their alliance

\* Yet, even among the Jews, there was a government party who wished to introduce the use of the Greek Scriptures in the synagogues, and a reasonable party, who wished the people to understand the Scriptures, as appears from the phrase, “*Vel etiam patria forte—Italica hac dicimus—lingua,*” &c. *Justiniani, Nov.* 146. *Auth. Const.* 125.

with the state, and their possession of the ecclesiastical revenues of the church, were sure of being orthodox; and the provincial clergy were in constant danger of being regarded as heterodox, merely because they were not Greeks. There can be no doubt, that several of the national churches of the East owe some increase of their hostility to the Roman government to the circumstances adverted to, though the religious opinions of the Nestorians and Euty-chians found many sincere votaries in Syria, Egypt, and Armenia, independently of all national feelings. The sixth century gave strong proofs of the necessity that each country, which possessed a peculiar language and literature, should possess also its national church; and the struggle of the Roman empire, and of the Greek ecclesiastical establishment, against this attempt at national independence on the part of the Armenians, Syrians, Egyptians, Africans, and Italians, involved the empire in many difficulties, and opened a way, first for the Persians to push their invasions into the heart of the empire, and afterwards for the Mohammedans to conquer the eastern provinces, and virtually to put an end to the Roman power.

## CHAPTER IV.

## CONDITION OF THE GREEKS FROM THE DEATH OF JUSTINIAN TO THAT OF HERACLIUS. A. D. 565 — 641.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE HISTORY OF THE GREEK NATION AND THE ROMAN EMPIRE DURING THE REIGN OF JUSTIN THE SECOND — COMPLETE DISORGANIZATION OF ALL POLITICAL AND NATIONAL INFLUENCE DURING THE REIGNS OF TIBERIUS THE SECOND AND MAURICE — MAURICE CAUSES A REVOLUTION, BY ATTEMPTING TO RE-ESTABLISH THE ANCIENT AUTHORITY OF THE IMPERIAL ADMINISTRATION — PHOCAS WAS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF A REVOLUTION, NOT OF A NATIONAL PARTY — POSITION OF THE POPULATION OF THE EMPIRE UNDER HERACLIUS — CHANGE IN THE POSITION OF THE GREEK POPULATION, WHICH WAS PRODUCED BY THE SCLAVONIC ESTABLISHMENTS IN DALMATIA — INFLUENCE OF THE CAMPAIGNS OF HERACLIUS IN THE EAST ON THE GREEKS — CONDITION OF THE NATIVE POPULATION OF GREECE.

## SECTION I. — OBSERVATIONS ON THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE HISTORY OF THE GREEK PEOPLE AND THE ROMAN EMPIRE, DURING THE REIGN OF JUSTIN THE SECOND.

THE history of the Greeks, and that of the Roman empire, assume a new aspect during the period which elapsed between the deaths of Justinian and of Heraclius. The mighty nation, which the union of the Macedonians and Greeks had formed in the greater part of the East, was rapidly declining, and in many provinces, hastening to extinction.



Even the Hellenic race in Europe, which had for many centuries displayed the appearance of a people closely united by feelings, language, and religion, now began to break up into tribes as numerous as there were cantons and cities in Greece, and these tribes ceased to hold communication with one another, as each supplied all the demands of its diminished wants. Hellenic civilization, and all the fruits of the policy of Alexander the Great, had at last succumbed to Roman oppression. The people of Hellas directed their exclusive attention to their own local and religious institutions, as they felt they had no benefits to expect from the imperial government; and the emperor and the administration of the empire, now gave but little attention to any provincial business, not directly connected with the all-absorbing topic of the fiscal exigencies of the state.

The inhabitants of the various provinces of the Roman empire were every where forming local and religious associations, independent of the general government, and striving to live with as rare recurrence to the central administration at Constantinople as possible. National feelings daily exerted additional force in separating the subjects of the empire into communities, where language and religious opinions operated with more power on society, than the political allegiance enforced by the emperor. This separation of interests and feelings soon put an end to every prospect of regenerating the empire, and even presented momentary views of new political, religious, and national combinations, by which the dissolution of the eastern empire

seemed on the very eve of being effectuated. The history of the West offered the counterpart of the fate which threatened the East; and, according to all human calculations, Armenia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, and Hellas, were on the point of becoming independent states. But the inexorable aristocratic principle of Roman power possessed an inherent energy of existence very different from the republicanism of Greece, or the monarchies of the Macedonian empire. The Roman empire never relaxed its authority over its own subjects, nor did it ever cease to dispense to them an equal administration of justice, in every case in which its own fiscal demands were not directly concerned, and even then it authorized injustice by positive law. It never permitted its subjects to bear arms, unless those arms were received from the state, and directed by the emperor's officers; and when the imperial forces were defeated by the Avars and the Persians, its pride was unconquered. The emperors displayed the same spirit when the enemy was encamped before Constantinople, as the senate had shewn, when Hannibal marched from the field of Cannæ to the walls of Rome.

Events which no human sagacity could foresee, against which no political wisdom could contend, and which the philosopher can only explain by attributing them to the dispensation of that Providence who exhibits, in the history of the world, the progress of the education of the whole human species, at last put an end to the existence of the Roman empire in the East. Yet, the inhabitants of

the countries freed from the Roman yoke, instead of finding a freer range for the improvement of their individual and national advantages, felt that the appearance of Mohammed, and the victories of his followers, strengthened the power of despotism and bigotry; and many of the nations which had been enslaved by the Macedonians, and oppressed by the Romans, were exterminated by the Saracens.

The Roman emperors of the East appear to have fancied, that the strict administration of justice in civil and criminal affairs, superseded the necessity of carefully watching every detail of the ordinary proceedings of the government officers in the administrative department, forgetting that the legal establishment could only take cognizance of the exceptional cases, and that the well-being of the people depended on the daily conduct of their civil governors. It soon became apparent, that Justinian's reforms in the legislation of the empire had produced no improvement in the civil administration. That body of the population of the capital, and of the empire, which arrogated to itself the title of Romans, turned the privileges conferred by their rank in the imperial service, into a means of living at the expense of the people. But the emperor and his counsellors began to perceive, that the central administration had lost some of its former control over the every day life of the people; and Justin the Second seemed willing to make the concessions necessary to revive the feeling, that civil order, and security of property, flowed, as a natural result, from the mere existence of the

imperial government,—a feeling which had long powerfully supported the throne of the emperors.\*

The want of a fixed order of succession in the Roman empire, was an evil severely felt in all the provinces, and the enactment of precise rules for the hereditary transmission of the imperial dignity would have been a wise and useful addition to the *lex regia*, or constitution of the state.† This constitution was supposed to have delegated the legislative power to the emperor; for the theory, that the Roman people was the legitimate source of all authority, still floated in public opinion. Justinian, however, was sufficiently versed both in the laws and constitutional forms of the empire, to dread any precise qualification of this vague, and perhaps imaginary law; though the interests of the empire imperiously required that measures should be adopted to prevent the throne from becoming an object of civil war. A successor is apt to be a rival, and a regency in the Roman empire would have revived the power of the senate, and probably converted the government into an oligarchical aristocracy. Justinian, as he was childless, naturally felt unwilling to circumscribe his own power by any positive law, lest he should create a claim, which the authority

\* The *Novell.* cxlix. is ascribed to Justin. It is altogether a curious document for the illustration of the history of his reign. The following passage is worthy of attention. "Hortamur cujusque provinciæ sanctissimos episcopos, eos etiam qui inter possessores et incolas principatum tenent, ut per communem supplicationem ad potentiam nostram eos deferant, quos ad administrationem provinciæ suæ idoneos existiment." *Ed. Just.* iv.

† "Sed et, quod principi placuit, legis habet vigorem : cum lex regia quæ de ejus imperio lata est, populus ei, et in eum, omne imperium suum et potestatem concedat." *Just. Inst.* i. 2. 6. This supposed *lex regia*, was therefore equivalent to an act of parliament, vesting the legislative power in the crown.

of the senate and people of Constantinople might have found the means of enforcing, and thus a legal control over the arbitrary exercise of the imperial power would have been established. A doubtful succession was also an event viewed with satisfaction by most of the leading men in the senate, the palace, and the army, as they might expect to advance their private fortunes, during the period of intrigue and uncertainty inseparable from such a contingency. The partizans of a fixed succession would only be found among the lawyers of the capital, the clergy, and the civil and financial administrators in the provinces; for the Roman citizens and nobility, forming a privileged class, were generally averse from such a project, as tending to diminish their importance. The abolition of the ceremony attending the sanction of the emperor's election by the senate and the people, would have been viewed as an arbitrary change in the constitution, and as an attempt to rob the inhabitants of the eastern empire of the boast, "that they lived under a legal monarch, and not under a hereditary despot like the Persians,"—a boast which they still uttered with pride.

The death of Justinian had so long threatened the empire with civil war, that all parties were anxious to avert the catastrophe; and Justin, one of his nephews, who held the office of master of the palace, was peaceably installed as his uncle's successor. The energy of his personal character enabled him to turn to his advantage the traces of ancient forms that still survived in the Roman state; and the momentary political importance thus given to

these forms, serves to explain to us, that the Roman government was even then very far from a pure despotism. The phrase, "the senate, and the Roman people," still exerted so much influence over public opinion, that Justin considered a public ratification of his title as not unimportant. The senate was instructed by his partizans, to solicit him to accept the imperial dignity, though he had already secured both the troops and the treasury; and the people were assembled in the hippodrome, in order to enable the new emperor to deliver an oration, in which he assured them, that their happiness, and not his own repose, should always be the chief object of his government.\* The character of Justin the Second was honourable, but it is said to have been capricious; he was, however, neither destitute of personal abilities, nor great energy.† Disease, and temporary fits of insanity, compelled him at last to resign the direction of public business to others, and in this critical conjuncture, his choice displayed both judgment and patriotism. He passed over his own brothers and his son-in-law, in order to select the man who appeared alone capable of re-establishing the fortunes of the Roman empire by his talents. This man was Tiberius the Second.

The commencement of Justin's reign was marked by vigour, perhaps even by rashness. He considered the annual subsidies paid by Justinian to the Persians and the Avars in the light of a disgraceful tribute, and, as he refused to make any farther payments, he was soon involved in war with both these powerful

\* CORIPPUS, *De laud. Justinii minoris*, l. ii. v. 337.

† THEOPHANIS *Chron.* p. 208.

enemies at the same time. Yet, so inconsistent was the Roman administration, that the Lombards, by no means a powerful or numerous people, were allowed to conquer the greater part of Italy almost unopposed. As this conquest was the first military transaction that occurred during his reign, and as the Lombards occupy an important place in the history of European civilization, the loss of Italy has been usually selected as a convincing proof of the weakness and incapacity of Justin.

The country occupied by the Lombards on the Danube, was exhausted by their oppressive rule; and they found great difficulty in maintaining their position, in consequence of the neighbourhood of the Avars, the growing strength of the Sclavonians, and the perpetual hostility of the Gepids. The diminished population, and increasing poverty of the surrounding countries, no longer supplied the means of supporting a numerous body of warriors in that contempt for every useful occupation, which was essential to the preservation of the national superiority of the Gothic race. The Sclavonic neighbours and subjects of the Gothic tribes, were gradually becoming as well armed as their masters; and as many of those neighbours combined the pursuits of agriculture with their pastoral and predatory habits, they were slowly rising to a national superiority. Pressed by these circumstances, Alboin, king of the Lombards, resolved to emigrate, and to attempt to effect a settlement in Italy, the richest and most populous country in his neighbourhood. To secure himself during the expedition, he proposed to the Avars to unite their forces and destroy the

kingdom of the Gepids, agreeing to abandon all claims to the conquered country, and to remain satisfied with half the moveable spoil.

This singular alliance was successful: the united forces of the Lombards and Avars overpowered the Gepids, and destroyed their kingdom in Panonia, which had existed for one hundred and fifty years. The Lombards immediately commenced their emigration. The Heruls had already quitted this desolated country, and thus the last remains of the Gothic race, which had lingered on the confines of the eastern empire, abandoned their possessions to the Hunnic tribes which they had long successfully opposed, and to the Sclavonians whom they had for ages ruled.

The historians of this period, on the authority of Paul the Deacon, a Lombard chronicler, have asserted, that Narses invited the Lombards into Italy, in order to avenge an insulting message with which the Empress Sophia had accompanied an order of her husband Justin, for the recall of the aged eunuch to Constantinople.\* The court was dissatisfied with the expense of Narses in the administration of Italy, and required, that the province should remit a larger sum to the imperial treasury than it had hitherto done. The Italians, on the other hand, complained of the military severity and fiscal oppression of his government. The last acts of the life of Narses are, however, quite incompatible with treasonable designs; and probably, the knowledge which the Emperor Justin and his cabinet must have possessed of the impossibility of deriving

\* PAULUS DIACONUS, *De gothis Langobardorum*, iii. 5. . .



any surplus revenue from the agricultural districts of Italy, offers the simplest explanation of the indifference manifested at Constantinople to the Lombard invasion. It would be apparently nearer the truth to affirm, that the Lombards entered Italy with the tacit sanction of the empire, than that Narses acted as a traitor.

As soon as Narses received the order of recall, he proceeded to Naples, on his way to Constantinople; but the advance of the Lombards alarmed the Italians to such a degree, that they despatched a deputation to beg him to resume the government. The Bishop of Rome repaired to Naples, to persuade Narses of the sincere repentance of the provincials, who now perceived the danger of losing a ruler of talent at such a crisis. No suspicion, therefore, could have then prevailed amongst the Italians of any communications between Narses and the Lombards, nor could they have suspected, that an experienced courtier, a wise statesman, and an able general, would, in his extreme old age, allow revenge to get the better of his reason, else they would have trembled at his return to power, and dreaded his vengeance, instead of confiding in his talents. And even in examining history at this distance of time, we ought certainly to weigh the conduct and character of a long public life, against the dramatic tale of an empress sending to a viceroy a grossly insulting message, and the improbability that the viceroy should publicly proclaim his thirst for revenge. The story, that the Empress Sophia sent a distaff and spindle to the ablest soldier in the empire, and that the veteran, should have

declared in his passion, that he would spin her a thread which she should not easily unravel, seems a fable, which bears a character of fancy and of simplicity of ideas, marking its origin in a ruder state of society than that which reigned at the court of Justin the Second. A Gothic or Lombard origin of the fable, is farther supported by the fact, that it must have produced no ordinary sensation among the Germanic nations, to see a eunuch invested with the highest commands in the army and the state, and the sensation could not fail to give rise to numerous idle tales. The story of Narses's treason, may have arisen at the time of his death; but it is remarkable, that no Greek author makes any mention of it before Constantine Porphyrogenitus, in the tenth century; and what is still more extraordinary, and countenancing, in some degree, the inference of at least tacit consent on the part of the Roman emperor, is the fact, that no earlier notice of the conquest of Italy, by the Lombards, occurs in any Greek writer.\* Narses really accepted the invitation of the Italians to return to Rome, where he commenced the necessary preparations for resisting the Lombards, but his death occurred before their arrival in Italy.

The historians of Justin's reign are full of complaints of the abuses which had infected the administration of justice, yet the facts which they record

\* A. D. 949. CONSTANTINI PORPH. *De adm. imperio*. 17. The emperor's extreme want of exactness in his account of this event, proves that he had no authentic document to copy. It confounds chronology and persons; mentions an Empress Irene, and a Patriarch Zacharias the Athenian, as cotemporaries of Narses, and never names the Emperor Justin. See Banduri's *note*, vol. iii. p. 331. ed Bonn.

tend distinctly to exculpate the emperor from any fault, and prove incontestably, that the corruption had its seat in the vices of the whole system of the civil government of the empire. The most remarkable anecdote selected to illustrate the corruption of the judicial department, indicates that the real cause of the disorder lay in the increasing power of the official aristocracy connected with the civil administration. A man of rank, on being cited before the prefect of the city for an act of injustice, ridiculed the summons, and excused himself from appearing to answer it, as he was engaged to attend an entertainment given by the emperor.\* In consideration of this circumstance, the prefect did not venture to arrest him; but he proceeded immediately to the palace, entered the state apartments, and addressing Justin, declared, that, as a judge, he was ready to execute every law for the strict administration of justice, but since the emperor honoured criminals, by admitting them to the imperial table where his authority was of no avail, he begged to be allowed to resign his office. Justin, without hesitation, asserted, that he would never defend any act of injustice, and that even should he himself be the person accused, he would submit to be punished. The prefect, thus authorized, seized the accused, and carried him to his court for trial. The emperor applauded the conduct of his judge; but this act of energy is said to have so completely astonished the inhabitants of Constantinople, that, for thirty days, no accusation was brought before the prefect. This

\* *μάχιςτός τις*. CEDRENIUS, vol. i. 389. *τῶν ἐπισημοτέρων συγκλητικῶν ἱστ.* ZONARAS, ii. 71. MANASSIS *Chron.* p. 69.

effect of the impartial administration of justice on the people seems strange, if the historians of the period are correct in their complaints of the general injustice. The anecdote is, however, valuable, as it reveals the real cause of the duration of the eastern empire, and shews, that the crumbling political edifice was sustained by the judicial administration. Justin also paid every attention to relieve his subjects from the burden which the arrears of the public taxes were always causing to the people, without enriching the treasury.\*

If Justin engaged rashly in a quarrel with Persia, he certainly omitted no means of strengthening himself during the contest. He formed alliances with the Turks of central Asia, and with the Ethiopians, who occupied a part of Arabia; but, in spite of his allies, the arms of the empire were unsuccessful in the East. A long series of predatory excursions were carried on by the Romans and the Persians, and many provinces of both empires were reduced to a state of desolation by this barbarous species of warfare. Chosroes succeeded in capturing Dara, the bulwark of Mesopotamia, and in ravaging Syria in the most terrible manner; half a million of the inhabitants of this flourishing province were carried away as slaves into Persia. In the meantime, the Avars consolidated their empire on the Danube, by compelling the Huns, Bulgarians, Slavonians, and the remains of the Goths, to submit to their authority. Justin vainly attempted to arrest

\* See *Novell.* cxlviii. and cxlix. both ascribed to Justin. Also *Novell.* clxi. of Tiberius, who says, "ab avaritia eorum, qui magistratus emunt magis, quam accipiunt."

their career, by encouraging the Franks of Austrasia to attack them. The Avars possessed force sufficient to continue their war with the empire, and defeated the Roman army under Tiberius, the future emperor.

The misfortunes which assailed the empire on every side, and the increasing difficulties of the internal administration, demanded exertions, of which the health of Justin rendered him incapable. Tiberius seemed the only man competent to guide the vessel of the state through the storm, and Justin had the magnanimity to name him as successor, with the dignity of Cæsar, and the sense to commit to him the entire control over all the public administration. The conduct of the Cæsar soon changed the fortune of war in the East, though the European provinces were still abandoned to the ravages of the Slavonians.\* Chosroes was defeated at Melitene, though he commanded his army in person, and the Romans, pursuing their success, penetrated into Babylonia, and plundered all the provinces of Persia to the very shores of the Caspian Sea.

It is surprising that we find no mention of the Greek people, nor of Greece itself, in the memorials of the reign of Justin. It is in vain to speculate on the cause; but it is evident, that some important reason existed for the neglect with which Greece began to be treated by the Constantinopolitan government. Justinian had plundered Greece of as large a portion of her revenues as he could; Justin and his successors utterly neglected her defence

\* MENANDER, p. 124. 164. ed. Paris, 327. 404. ed. Bonn.

against the Slavonian incursions, yet it appears that the Greeks contrived still to retain so much of their ancient spirit of independence, as to awaken a feeling of jealousy amongst that more aristocratic portion of their nation, which assumed the Roman name. That the imperial government overlooked no trace of nationality among any section of its subjects, is evident from a law which Justin passed to enforce the conversion of the Samaritans to Christianity, and which apparently was successful in exterminating that people, as, though they previously occupied almost as important a place in the history of the eastern empire as the Jews, they cease to be mentioned from the time of Justin's law.\*

SECTION II.—COMPLETE DISORGANIZATION OF ALL  
POLITICAL AND NATIONAL INFLUENCE DURING THE  
REIGNS OF TIBERIUS THE SECOND, AND MAURICE.

THE reigns of Tiberius and Maurice present the remarkable spectacle of two princes, of no ordinary talents, devoting all their energies to improve the condition of their country, without being able to arrest its decline, though that decline evidently proceeded from internal causes. The great evil of the Roman empire arose from the government's being in discord with every class of its subjects. A powerful army still existed, the administration was perfectly arranged, the finances were not in a state of disorder, and every exertion was made to

\* A. D. 572. *Norell.* cxliv.

enforce the strictest administration of justice; yet, in spite of the existence of so many elements of good government, the government was bad, unpopular, and oppressive. No feeling of patriotism existed in any class; no bond of union united the monarch and his subjects; and no ties of common interest rendered their public conduct amenable to the same laws. No fundamental institution of a national character, enforced the duties of the citizen by the bonds of morality and religion; and thus the emperors could only apply administrative reforms as a cure for an universal political palsy. Great hopes of improvement were, however, entertained when Tiberius mounted the throne; for his prudence, justice, and talents, were the theme of general admiration. He opposed the enemies of the empire with vigour, but, as he saw that the internal ills of the state were infinitely more dangerous than the Persians and the Avars, he made peace the great object of his exertions, in order that he might devote his exclusive attention, and the whole power of the empire, to the reform of the civil and military administration. But he solicited peace from Hormisdas, the son of Chosroes, in vain. When he found all reasonable terms of accommodation rejected by the Persian, he attempted, by a desperate effort, to terminate the war. The whole disposable military force of the empire was collected in Asia Minor, and an army of one hundred and fifty thousand men was, by this means, assembled. The Avars were allowed to seize Sirmium, and the emperor consented to conclude with them an inglorious and disadvantageous peace,

so important did it appear to him to secure success to his arms in the struggle with Persia. The war commenced with some success, but the death of Tiberius interrupted all his plans. He died after a short reign of four years, with the reputation of being the best sovereign who had ever ruled the eastern empire, and he bequeathed to his son-in-law Maurice, the difficult task of carrying into execution his extensive schemes of reform.

Maurice was personally acquainted with every branch of the public administration—he possessed all the qualities of an excellent minister—he was a humane and honourable man,—but he wanted the great sagacity necessary to rule the Roman empire in the difficult times in which he reigned. His private character merited all the eulogies of the Greek historians, for he was a good man and a true Christian. When the people of Constantinople and their bigoted patriarch determined to burn an unfortunate individual as a magician, he made every effort, though in vain, to save the persecuted man.\* He gave a feeling proof of the sincerity of his faith after his dethronement; for when the child of another was offered to the executioners instead of his own, he himself revealed the error, lest an innocent person should perish by his act. He was orthodox in his religion, and economical in his expenditure, virtues which his subjects were well qualified to appreciate, and much inclined to admire. The one ought to have endeared him to the people, and the other to the clergy; but unfortunately, his want of success in war was connected with his

\* THEOPHYLACTI SIMOCATTE, *Hist.* i. xi. EVAGRIUS, vi. 2.



parsimony, and his humanity was regarded as less orthodox than Christian. The impression of his virtues was thus neutralized, and he could never secure to his government the great political advantages which he might have derived from popularity. As soon as his reign proved unfortunate, he was called a miser and a Marcionite.\*

By supporting the Bishop of Constantinople in his assumption of the title of œcumenical patriarch, Maurice excited the violent animosity of Pope Gregory the First; and the great reputation of that sagacious pontiff has induced western historians to examine all the actions of the eastern emperor through a veil of ecclesiastical prejudice. Gregory, in his letters, accuses Maurice of supporting the venality of the public administration, and even of selling the high office of exarch. These accusations are doubtless correct enough when applied to the system of the Byzantine court; but no prince seems to have felt more deeply than Maurice the evil effects of that system, or made sincerer efforts to reform it. That personal avarice was not the cause of the financial errors of his administration, is attested by numerous instances of his liberality recorded in history, and from the fact, that even during his turbulent reign, he was intent on reducing the public burdens of his subjects, and actually succeeded in his plans to a considerable extent.†

\* The Marcionites held, that an intermediate deity of a mixed nature neither perfectly good nor perfectly evil, is the creator of this world. MOSHEIM'S *Ecclesiastical History*.

† Theophylactus Simocatta says, that Maurice reduced the taxes one-third, but the assertion is too general to induce us to admit that so important a change could remain unnoticed by every other authority. The phrase almost

The flatteries heaped by Gregory the Great on the worthless tyrant Phocas, shew clearly enough that policy, not justice, regulated the measure of the pope's praise and censure.

Maurice had been selected by Tiberius as the confidential agent in his projects for the reform of the army; and much of his misfortune originated in his attempting to carry into execution, plans which required the calm judgment, and the elevation of character of their author, in order to create, throughout the empire, the feeling, that their adoption was necessary for the salvation of the Roman power. The enormous expense of the army, and the independent existence, unaffected by any national feeling, which it maintained, now compromised the safety of the government, as much as it had done before the reforms of Constantine. Tiberius had begun cautiously to lay the foundation of a new system, by adding to his household troops a corps of fifteen thousand heathen slaves, whom he purchased and disciplined.\* He placed this little army under the immediate command of Maurice, who had already displayed an attachment to military reforms, by attempting to restore the ancient mode

warrants the inference that a remission of arrears was the concession accorded by the emperor, but only a Byzantine panegyrist could ascribe any great merit to the remission of one-third of a bad debt. *Ἀναφέρειται δὲ καὶ τὴν τρίτην μοῖραν τῶν φόρων συγχωρεῖσθαι τοῖς ὑπηκόοις τὸν βασιλεῖα Μαυρίκιον.* lib. viii. 13.

\* THEOPHANES *Chron.* 213. The words of Theophanes shew, that this corps perfectly resembled the Janissaries in their earliest organization, and adds another to the many examples already noticed, of the powerful influence exercised on the policy of the rulers of Constantinople by the singular position of that city, both politically and geographically. *Ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς Τιβέριος ἀγοράσας σώματα ἰθνηῶν, κατίσθησι στρατιῶμα ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ ἀμφίσπας καὶ καθοπλίσας αὐτούς.*

of encamping Roman armies. This taste for improvements appears to have created a feeling of dissatisfaction in the army, and there seems every reason to ascribe the unsuccessful operations of Maurice on the Iberian frontier in the year 580, to a feeling of discontent among the soldiers.\* That he was a military pedant, may be inferred from the fact that he found time to write a work on military tactics, without succeeding in acquiring a great military reputation; and it is certain that he was suspected by the soldiers of being an enemy to the privileges and pretensions of the army, and that by them all his actions were scanned with a jealous eye.† During the Persian war, also, he rashly attempted to diminish the pay and rations of the troops, and this ill-timed measure caused a sedition, which was suppressed with the greatest difficulty, but which left feelings of ill will in the minds of the emperor and the army, and laid the foundation of the ruin of both.‡

Fortune, however, proved eminently favourable to Maurice in his contest with Persia, and he obtained that peace, which neither the prudence nor the military exertions of Tiberius had succeeded in concluding. A civil war rendered Chosroes, the son of Hormisdas, an exile, and compelled him to solicit the protection of the Romans. Maurice received him with humanity, and, acting according

\* THEOPHYLACTI SIM. *Hist.* iii. 1. MENANDRI *Fr.* p. 435, ed Bonn.

† The only edition yet published of this work of the Emperor Maurice, appears to be the one mentioned by Gibbon, (viii. 205.) *Arriani Tactica cum Mauricii Artis Militaris, lib. xii. primus edid. vers. lat. notisque illustr.* J. SCHEFFER. Upsal, 1664. 8vo.

‡ A. D. 588.

to the dictates of a just and generous policy, aided him to recover his paternal throne. When reinstated on the throne of Persia, Chosroes concluded a peace with the Roman empire, which promised to prove lasting; for Maurice wisely sought to secure its stability, by demanding no concession injurious to the honour or political interests of Persia. Dara and Nisibis were restored to the Romans, and a strong and defensible frontier formed by the cession, on the part of Chosroes, of a portion of Pers-Armenia.

SECTION III. — MAURICE CAUSES A REVOLUTION, BY ATTEMPTING TO RE-ESTABLISH THE ANCIENT AUTHORITY OF THE IMPERIAL ADMINISTRATION.

As soon as Maurice had established tranquillity in the Asiatic provinces of the empire, he directed his whole force against the Avars, in order to restrain the ravages which they were annually committing in all the country between the Danube and the coast of Thrace. The Avar kingdom now embraced all that portion of Europe which extends from the Carnian Alps to the Black Sea; and the Huns, Slavonians, and Bulgarians, who had previously lived under independent governments, were now either united with their conquerors, or submitted, if not as subjects, at least as vassals, to own the superiority of the Avar monarch. After the conclusion of peace with Persia, the sovereign of the Avars was the only dangerous enemy to the Roman power then in existence; but the Avars, in spite of their

rapid and extensive conquests, were unable to assemble an army capable of encountering the regular forces of the empire in the open field. Maurice, confident in the superiority of Roman discipline, resolved to conduct a campaign against the barbarians in person; and there appeared no doubt of its proving successful. His conduct, on this important occasion, is marked by the most singular vacillation of purpose. He quitted Constantinople apparently with the firmest determination to place himself at the head of the army, yet, when a deputation from the court and senate followed him, and entreated that he would take care of his sacred person, he made this solicitation a pretext for a change of resolution, and returned back to his capital. His courage was very naturally called in question, and both his friends and enemies attribute his alarm to sinister omens. It seems, however, not improbable, that his firmness was really shaken by more alarming proofs of his unpopularity, and by the conviction that he would have to encounter far greater difficulties than he had previously expected, in enforcing his projects of reform among the troops. As very often happens to weak and obstinate men, he became distrustful of the success of his measures for re-establishing discipline in the Roman armies when he had committed himself to attempt their execution; and he shrank from attempting to perform the task in person, though he must have doubted whether an undertaking requiring so rare a combination of military skill and political sagacity, could ever succeed, unless conducted under the eye of its author, and supported by the personal influence

and prompt authority of the emperor. His conduct excited the contempt of the soldiers; and whether he trembled at omens, or shrank from responsibility, he was laughed at in the army for his timidity: so that even had nothing occurred to awaken the suspicion or rouse the hatred of the troops employed against the Avars, their scorn for their sovereign would have brought them to the very verge of rebellion.

Though the Roman army gained several battles, and displayed considerable military skill, and much of the ancient military superiority in the campaigns against the Avars, still the inhabitants of Moesia, Illyria, Dardania, Thrace, and Macedonia, were exposed to annual incursions of the hostile hordes, who crossed the Danube to plunder the property of the proprietors and cultivators of the soil, so that, at last, whole provinces were left uncultivated, and remained almost entirely depopulated. The imperial armies were generally ill commanded, for the generals were usually selected, either from among the relations of the emperor, or from among the court aristocracy. The spirit of opposition which had arisen between the camp and the court, made it unsafe to intrust the chief command of large bodies of troops to soldiers of fortune, and the most experienced of the Roman officers, who had been bred to the profession of arms, were only employed in secondary posts.\*

\* The court generals of the time were Maurice himself, his brother Peter, his son-in-law Philippicus, Heraclius, the father of the emperor of that name, Comentiulus, and probably Priscus, who appears to be the same person as Crispus. See GIBBON, viii. 216, note f. The professional soldiers, who attained high commands, were Droctulf, a Sueve, Apsich, a Hun, and Ilifred, whose name proves his Gothic or Germanic origin.

Priscus, who was one of the ablest and most influential of the Roman generals, carried on the war with some success, and invaded the country of the Avars and Sclavonians; but his successes appear to have excited the jealousy of the emperor, who, fearing his own army more than the forces of his enemies, removed Priscus from the command, in order to intrust it to his own brother. The first duty of the new general was to remodel the organization of the army, to prepare for the reception of the emperor's ulterior measures of reform. The commencement of a campaign was most unwisely selected as the time for carrying this plan into execution, and a new sedition among the soldiery was the consequence. The troops being now engaged in continual disputes with the emperor and the civil administration, began to select from among their officers, the leaders whom they considered most attached to their own views, and these leaders began to negotiate with the government, and consequently, to undermine the existing discipline. The mutinous army was soon defeated by the Avars, and Maurice was constrained to conclude a treaty of peace.\* The provisions of this treaty were the immediate cause of the ruin of Maurice. They had taken prisoners about twelve thousand of the Roman soldiers, and offered to ransom their captives for twelve thousand pieces of gold. It is even said, that when Maurice refused to pay this sum, they reduced their demand, and asked only four pieces of silver for each captive; but the emperor, though he consented to add twenty thousand pieces of gold to the former

\* A. D. 600.

subsidy, refused to pay any thing in order to ransom the Roman prisoners.\*

By this treaty, the Danube was declared the frontier of the empire, and the Roman officers were allowed to cross the river, in order to punish any ravages which the Sclavonians might commit within the Roman territory—a fact which seems to indicate the declining power of the Avar monarch, and the virtual independence of the Sclavonic tribes, to whom this provision applied. It may be inferred, also, from these terms, that Maurice could easily have delivered the captive Roman soldiers, had he wished to do so; and it is natural to conclude, that he left them in captivity to punish them for their mutinous behaviour, and neglect of discipline, to which he attributed both their captivity, and the misfortunes of the empire. It was commonly reported, however, at the time, that the emperor's avarice induced him to refuse to ransom the soldiers, though it is impossible to suppose, that Maurice would have committed an act of inhumanity, for the paltry saving which thereby accrued to the imperial treasury. The Avars, with singular, and probably unexpected barbarity, put all their prisoners to death. Maurice, certainly, never contemplated the possibility of their acting with such cruelty, or he would have felt all the impolicy of his conduct, even if it be supposed that passion had, for a time, extinguished

\* The four pieces of silver, were in value about one shilling and sixpence. The silver piece, called the *nequarius*, was equal to twelve folles. The follis was half an ounce of copper. The *milliarensis* was a silver coin of the value of twenty-four folles.



the usual humanity of his disposition.\* The murder of these soldiers was universally considered to have been caused by the avarice of the emperor; and the aversion which the army had long entertained to his government, was changed into a deep rooted hatred of his person; while the people participated in the feeling, from a natural dislike to an economical and unsuccessful reformer.

The peace with the Avars was of short duration. Priscus was again intrusted with the command of the army, and again restored the honour of the Roman arms. He carried hostilities beyond the Danube; and affairs were proceeding prosperously, when Maurice, with that perseverance in an unpopular course, which weak princes generally consider a proof of strength of character, renewed his attempts to enforce all his schemes for restoring the severest system of discipline. His brother was despatched to the army as commander-in-chief, with orders to place the troops in winter quarters, in the enemy's country, and compel them to forage for their subsistence. A sedition was the consequence: and the soldiers, now supplied with leaders, soon broke out into rebellion, threw off their allegiance to Maurice, and raised Phocas, one of the officers who had risen to distinction in the previous seditions, to the chief command. Phocas led the army directly to Constantinople, where, having found a powerful party dissatisfied with Maurice, he lost no time in securing the throne. The injudicious system of reform pursued by Maurice had rendered

\* THEOPHYLACTI SIM. *Hist.* vii. 15. THEOPHANIS *Ch.* 235, compared with the notice in the *Chronicon Paschale*, p. 379, A. D. 602.

him not only unpopular among the people, whose burdens he wished to alleviate, but disliked by the army, whose abuses he had resolved to eradicate. Yet, the emperor's confidence in the rectitude of his intentions, supported his character in the most desperate circumstances; and when abandoned by all his subjects, and convinced by a succession of misfortunes, that the termination both of his reign and his life was approaching, he shewed no signs of cowardice. As his plan of reform had been directed to the increase of his own power, as the centre of the whole administration, and as he had shewn too clearly to all men, that his increased authority, when attained, was to be directed against more than one section of the government agents, he lost all influence from the moment he was unable to direct his cabinet in person; and when he found it necessary to abandon Constantinople, he was deserted by every follower. The agents of Phocas soon captured Maurice and all his family, and the new emperor ordered them to be immediately executed. The conduct of Maurice at his death, affords proof that his private virtues could not be too highly eulogized. He died with fortitude and resignation, after witnessing the execution of his children; and when an attempt, which has been already alluded to, was made to substitute the infant of a nurse, instead of his youngest child, he himself revealed the deceit, in order to prevent the death of an innocent person.

The sedition which put an end to the reign of Maurice, though it originated in the camp, became, as the army advanced towards the capital, a popular, as well as a military movement. Many causes had

long threatened a conflict between official power and popular feeling. The people generally hated the oppressive administration of the Roman empire, while the discordant elements of society in the East had latterly been gaining strength. The central government had found great difficulty in repressing religious disputes and ecclesiastical party feuds. The factions of the amphitheatre, and the national hatred of various classes in the empire, frequently broke out into acts of violence, which caused bloodshed. Monks, charioteers, and usurers, could all raise themselves above the law; and the interests of particular bodies of men proved often more powerful to produce disorder and disorganization, than the provincial and local government to enforce tranquillity. The administrative institutions were everywhere too weak to replace the declining strength of the central authority. A persuasion of the absolute necessity of re-invigorating the Roman government had gone abroad; but the power of a rapacious aristocracy, and the corruption of an idle populace in the capital, fed by the state, presented insuperable obstacles to the tranquil adoption of any reasonable plan of political reformation. The provincials were too poor and ignorant to originate any scheme of amelioration, and the task, it was dangerous even for an emperor to attempt, as no national institutions enabled the sovereign to unite any powerful body of his subjects in a systematic opposition to the venality of the aristocracy, the corruption of the capital, and the license of the army. Those national feelings which began to acquire force in some provinces, and in a few municipalities, where the attacks of

Justinian had proved ineffectual, tended more to awaken a desire for independence, than a wish to support the emperor, or a hope of improvement in the Roman administration.

The arbitrary and illegal conduct of the imperial officers, while it rendered sedition venial, very often insured its partial success, and complete impunity.\* The measures of reform proposed by Maurice, appear to have been directed, like the reforms of most absolute monarchs, rather to increase his own authority, than to establish a system of administration so firmly established on a legal basis, as to prove even more powerful than the despotic will of the emperor himself. To confine the absolute power of the emperor to the executive administration, to make the law supreme, and to vest the legislative authority in some responsible body or senate, were not projects suitable to the age of Maurice, and perhaps hardly possible in the social state of society. Maurice resolved, that his first step in the career of improvement should be, to render the army, long a licentious and turbulent check on the imperial power, a well disciplined and efficient instrument of his will; and he hoped, in this manner, to repress the tyranny of the official aristocracy, restrain the license of the military chiefs, prevent the sects of Nestorians and Eutychians from forming separate states, and to render the authority of the central government supreme, in all the distant provinces and isolated cities of the empire. In his struggle to obtain this result, he was compelled to make use of the existing

\* The sedition of Asimus. THEOPHYLACTI SIM. *Hist.* vii. 3.

administration ; and consequently, he appears in the history of the empire as the supporter and protector of a detested aristocracy, equally unpopular with the army and the people, while his ulterior plans for the improvement of the civil condition of his subjects were never made known, and perhaps never clearly framed even by himself, though it is evident, that many of them ought to have preceded his military changes. This view of the political position of Maurice, as it could not escape the observation of his contemporaries, is alluded to in "the quaint expression of Evagrius," that Maurice expelled from his mind the democracy of the passions, and established the aristocracy of reason, though the ecclesiastical historian, a cautious courtier, either could not or would not express himself with a more general application, or in a clearer manner.\*

SECTION IV. — PHOCAS WAS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF  
A REVOLUTION, NOT OF A NATIONAL PARTY.

THOUGH Phocas ascended the throne in virtue of his position as leader of the rebellious army, he was universally regarded as the representative of the popular hostility to the existing order of administration, to the ruling aristocracy, and to the Greek party in the eastern church. A great portion of the Roman world expected improvement as a consequence of any change, but that produced by the election of Phocas to the Roman purple, was

\* GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall*, viii. 143. note.

followed by a series of misfortunes almost unparalleled in the history of revolutions. The ties which connected the social and political institutions of the eastern empire, were severed, and the circumstances which must have appeared to contemporaries only as the prelude of a passing storm, tending to purify the moral horizon, soon created a whirlwind which tore up the very roots of the Roman power, and prepared the minds of men to receive new impressions.

The government of Phocas soon convinced the majority of his subjects, that the rebellion of a licentious army, and the sedition of a pampered populace, were not sources capable of selecting the proper instruments for ameliorating the condition of the empire. In spite of the hopes of his followers, of the eulogium on the column which still exists in the Roman forum, and of the praises of Pope Gregory the Great, it was quickly discovered that Phocas was a worse sovereign than his predecessor. Even as a soldier, he was inferior to Maurice, and the glory of the Roman arms was stained by his cowardice or incapacity. Chosroes, the king of Persia, moved, as he asserted, by gratitude, and the respect due to the memory of his benefactor Maurice, declared war against his murderer. A war commenced between the Persian and Roman empires, which proved the last and bloodiest of their numerous struggles; and its violence and strange vicissitudes contributed, in a great degree, to the dissolution of both these ancient monarchies. The success of Chosroes compelled Phocas to conclude an immediate peace with the Avars, in order to

secure himself from being attacked in Constantinople.\* The treaty which he concluded is of great importance in the history of the Greek population in Europe; but unfortunately we can only trace it in its effects at a later period. The whole of the agricultural districts of the Roman empire in Europe, was virtually abandoned to the ravages of the northern people, and from the Danube to the Peloponnesus, the Slavonian tribes ravaged the country with impunity, or settled in the depopulated provinces almost unnoticed. Phocas availed himself of the treaty to transport into Asia the whole military force which he could collect, but the Roman armies, having lost their discipline, were everywhere defeated. Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, Phœnicia, Cappadocia, Galatia, and Paphlagonia, were laid waste; and nothing appears to have saved the Roman empire from complete conquest by the Persians, but the wars carried on at the time by Chosroes with the Armenians and the Turks, which prevented his concentrating his whole force against Constantinople. The tyranny and incapacity of Phocas rapidly increased the disorders in the civil and military administration; seditions broke out in the army, and rebellions in the provinces. The emperor, either because he partook of the bigotry of his age, or because he desired, by his measures, to secure the support of the clergy, and the applause of the populace, determined to prove his orthodoxy, by ordering all the Jews in the empire to be baptized. The Jews, who formed a wealthy and

\* THEOPHANIS (*Chron.* 245. 251.)

powerful class in many of the cities of the East, resisted this act of oppression, and caused a bloody sedition, which contributed much to aid the progress of the Persian arms.

Various districts and provinces in the distant parts of the empire, observing the confusion which reigned in the central administration, and the increasing weakness of the imperial power, availed themselves of the opportunity to extend the authority of their municipal institutions; and the dawn of papal authority, and Italian civil liberty, began to exist, though it is hardly perceptible in history. Phocas at last exhausted the patience even of the timid aristocracy of Constantinople, and all classes directed their attention to seek a successor to the tyrant. Heraclius, the exarch of Africa, had commanded with success in the former war with Persia, and had long governed Africa, in which his family possessed great influence, almost as an independent sovereign.\* To him the leading men at Constantinople addressed their complaints and their prayers that he would deliver the empire from ruin, and dethrone the reigning tyrant.

The exarch of Africa soon collected a considerable army, and fitted out a numerous fleet. The command of this expedition was given to his son Heraclius; and as the possession of Egypt, which supplied provisions for the idle populace of the capital, was necessary to secure tranquillity after conquest, Nicetas, the nephew of the exarch, was sent with an army to support his cousin, and secure both Egypt and Syria. Heraclius proceeded

\* DUPRESNE DUCANGE, *Historia Byzantina*, 117.



directly to Constantinople, and the fate of Phocas was decided in a single naval engagement, fought within sight of his palace. The disorder which reigned in every branch of the administration, in consequence of the folly and incapacity of the ignorant soldier who ruled the empire, was so great, that no measures had been concerted for offering a vigorous resistance to the African expedition. Phocas was taken prisoner, and brought before the young Heraclius, who asked him why he had governed the empire so ill. The tyrant replied with singular dignity, feeling, probably, that the difficulties of the task were quite as great an obstacle to good government as his own incapacity. "Govern it better," was his proud answer. Heraclius lost his temper at the advantage which his predecessor had gained in this verbal contest; and, as if to shew that it was very questionable whether he himself would prove either a wiser sovereign or a better man than Phocas, he struck the dethroned emperor with his own hand, and then ordered his limbs to be cut off before his body was decapitated. All the leading partizans of Phocas and his family were executed, as if to afford evidence that the cruelty of that tyrant had been as much a national as a personal vice. Since his death, he has been fortunate enough to find defenders, who consider that his alliance with Pope Gregory, and his leaning towards the Latin party in the church, are to be regarded as signs of virtue, and proofs of a capacity for government.\*

\* Several works have been published concerning the Emperor Phocas, but they appear to be wanting in the Bibliothéque du Roi, and in the library of

SECTION V. — POSITION OF THE POPULATION OF THE  
EMPIRE UNDER HERACLIUS.

THE young Heraclius became emperor of the East, and his father continued to rule Africa, which the family appear to have regarded as a hereditary domain. For several years, the government of the new emperor was quite as unsuccessful as that of his predecessor, though, doubtless, it was more popular and less tyrannical. There are reasons, however, for believing, that this period of apparent misgovernment and general misfortune was not one of complete neglect. Though defeats and disgraces followed one another with rapidity, the causes of these disasters had grown up during the preceding reigns; and Heraclius was compelled to labour silently in clearing away many petty abuses, and in forming a new corps of civil and military officers, before he could venture on any important act. His chief attention was of necessity devoted to prepare for the great struggle of restoring the Roman empire to some

the British Museum: A. DE STOPPELAAR, *Oratio pro Phoca Imperatore*; and SIMON VAN DER BRINK, *Oratio in Phocam Imperatorem*, Amstel. 1732. *Vertheidigung des K. Phocas*, in *Erlangischen gelehrten Anzeigen auf das Jahr*. 1749, p. 321 — 328, 409 — 414. This last work defends him against the accusation of having founded the power of the Popes — a virtue, and not a crime, in the eyes of some. D. CYPRIANI *Vom Ursprung des Papothums*, c. xvii. 812.

See, *Bibliotheca Historica instructa a Struvio, aucta a Budero, nunc vero a Muselio digesta*. Lipsiæ, Weidmann, 1790, 11 vols.

Both Phocas and Maurice were Cappadocians, and the verses in the Anthology probably were not very advantageous to the tranquillity of these emperors,

Καππαδοκῆαι φαῦλαι μὲν αἰεὶ ζώνης δι' τυχόντες,

φαιλότεραι· κίρδους δ' εἴηκα φαιλότεραι. x. τ. λ.

*Antholog.* iii 54, ed. Tauch. JOANNIS LYDI, *De Magist. P. R.* p. 250, ed. Bonn.

portion of its ancient strength and power; and he had enough of the Roman spirit to resolve, that, if he could not succeed, he would risk his own life and fortune in the attempt, and perish in the ruins of civilized society. History affords few records of the measures adopted by Heraclius during the early years of his reign; but their effect in reviving the strength and the energy of the imperial administration, is testified by the great changes which mark the subsequent period.

The reign of Heraclius is one of the most remarkable eras both in the history of the empire, and in the annals of mankind. It warded off the almost inevitable destruction of the Roman government for another century; it laid the foundation of that policy which prolonged the existence of the imperial power at Constantinople under a new modification, as the Byzantine or Greek monarchy; and it marks the period in the records of the human race, when that moral change came into active operation, which soon transformed the language and manners of the ancient world into those of modern nations. The eastern empire seems to be indebted to the talents of Heraclius, for its escape from those ages of barbarism which, for many centuries, prevailed in all western Europe. No period of society could offer a field for instructive study more likely to present practical results to the highly civilized political communities of modern Europe; yet there is no time of which the existing memorials of the constitution and frame of society are so imperfect and unsatisfactory. A few important historical facts and single events can alone be gleaned, from which

an outline of the administration of Heraclius may be drawn, and an attempt made to describe the situation of his Greek subjects.

The loss of many extensive provinces, and the destruction of numerous large armies since the death of Justinian, had given rise to a persuasion that the end of the Roman empire was approaching; and the events of the earlier part of the reign of Heraclius were not calculated to remove this impression. The civil government became gradually more oppressive in the capital, as the revenues of the provinces conquered by the Persians were lost. The military power of the empire had declined to such a degree, that the Roman armies were no where able to keep the field. A review of the position of the empire at the accession of Heraclius, attests the extraordinary talents of the man who could emerge from the accumulated disadvantages of his own situation, and that of his government, and rush on in a career of glory and conquest almost unrivalled. It proves also the wonderful perfection of the system of administration, which admitted of reconstructing the fabric of the civil government, after its whole organization had been completely shattered. The ancient supremacy of the Roman empire could not be restored by human genius: the progress of mankind down the stream of time, had rendered a return to the past condition of the world impracticable, but yet the progress of the torrent was, for a few years, arrested, and its current turned aside. The emperor's talents saved the empire and the imperial city of Constantinople, from almost certain destruction by the Persians and the Avars: and though his fortune

sank before the first fury of Mahommed's enthusiastic votaries, his sagacious administration had prepared those powerful means of resistance, which enabled the Greeks to check the Saracen armies almost at the threshold of their dominions; and the caliphs, while extending their successful conquests to the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic, were, for centuries, compelled to wage a doubtful war on the northern frontiers of Syria.

It was, perhaps, a misfortune for mankind, that Heraclius was by birth a Roman rather than a Greek, as his views were, from that accident, directed to the maintenance of the imperial dominion, without any reference to the national organization of his people. His civilization, like that of a large portion of the ruling class in the eastern empire, was now too far removed from the state of ignorance into which the mass of the population had fallen, for the one to be influenced by the feelings of the other, or for both to act together with the energy conferred by unity of purpose in a variety of ranks. Heraclius being, by birth and family connections, an African noble, must have regarded himself as of pure Roman blood, superior to all national prejudices, and bound by duty and policy to repress the domineering spirit of the Greek aristocracy in the state, and of the Greek hierarchy in the Church.\* Language and manners began to give to national feelings, almost as much power in forming men into distinct societies as political arrangements. The

\* DUCANGE, *Historia Byzantina*, 117.

influence of the clergy followed the divisions established by language, rather than the political organization adopted by the government: and as the clergy now formed the most popular and able portion of society, the church exerted more influence over the minds of the people than the civil administration, and the imperial power, even though the emperor was the acknowledged sovereign and master of the patriarchs and the pope. It is necessary to observe here, that the established church of the empire had ceased to be the universal Christian church. The Greeks had rendered themselves the sole depositaries of its power and influence; they had already corrupted Christianity into the Greek church; and every nation not Greek was rapidly forming a number of separate ecclesiastical societies to supply its own spiritual wants. The great body of the Armenians, Syrians, and Egyptians, were induced by national aversion from the ecclesiastical tyranny of the Greeks, as well as by spiritual preference of the doctrines of Nestorius and Eutyches, to oppose the established church. At the time Heraclius ascended the throne, these national and religious feelings already possessed the power of modifying the operations of the Roman government, and of enabling mankind to advance one step towards the establishment of individual liberty and intellectual independence. Circumstances, which will be subsequently noticed,\* prevented society from making any progress in this career of improvement, and effectually arrested its advance for many centuries. In western Europe, this struggle never entirely lost its important characteristic of a

moral contest for the enjoyment of personal rights, and the exercise of individual opinion ; and as no central government succeeded in maintaining itself permanently independent of all national feelings, a check on the formation of absolute authority always existed, both in the church and state. But the first display of a spirit of national feelings, combining with individual liberty, and opening up new views of civilization to the human intellect, really arose in the East. Heraclius, in his desire to restore the power of the empire, strove to destroy these sentiments of religious liberty. His plans of coercion or conciliation would evidently have failed as completely with the Nestorians, Eutychians, and Jacobites, as they did with the Jews ; but the contest with Mahommedanism closed the struggle, and concentrated the whole strength of the unconquered population of the empire in supporting the Greek church and the Constantinopolitan government.

In order fully to comprehend the lamentable state of weakness to which the empire was reduced, it will be necessary to take a cursory view of the condition of the different provinces. The continual ravages of the barbarians who occupied the country beyond the Danube had extended as far south as the Peloponnesus. The agricultural population was almost exterminated, except in those districts where it was protected by the immediate vicinity of fortified towns, or secured by the fastnesses of the mountains. The inhabitants of all the countries between the Archipelago and the Adriatic had been greatly diminished, and fertile provinces remained every where desolate, ready to receive the first

occupant. As great part of these countries yielded very little revenue to the government, they were considered by the court of Constantinople as of very little value, except in so far as they covered the capital from hostile attacks, and commanded the commercial routes to the west of Europe. At this time, the Indian and Chinese trade had in part been forced round the north of the Caspian Sea, in consequence of the Persian conquests in Syria and Egypt, and the disturbed state of the country immediately to the east of Persia. The rich produce transported by the caravans, which reached the northern shores of the Black Sea, was then transported to Constantinople, and from thence distributed through western Europe. Under these circumstances, Thessalonica and Dyrrachium became points of great consequence to the empire, and were successfully defended by the emperor amidst all his calamities. These two cities commanded the extremities of the usual road between Constantinople and Ravenna, and connected the towns on the Archipelago with the Adriatic and with Rome.\* The open country was abandoned to the Avars and Sclavonians, who were allowed to effect permanent settlements even to the south of the Via Egnatia; but none of these settlements were suffered to interfere with the lines of communication, without which, the imperial influence in Italy would have been soon annihilated, and the trade of the West lost to the Greeks. The ambition of the barbarians was inclined to dare any

\* *Tafel de Thessalonica*, proleg. cviii. p. 221. HÜLLMAN, *Geschichte des Byzantin. Handels*. 76.



attempt to encroach on the wealth of the eastern empire, and they tried to establish a system of maritime depredations in the Archipelago; but Heraclius was able to frustrate their schemes, though it is probable that he owed his success more to the exertions of the mercantile population of the Greek cities, than to the exploits of his own troops.\*

When disorder reigned in the territory nearest to the seat of government, it cannot be supposed that the administration of the distant provinces was conducted with greater prudence or success. The Gothic kingdom of Spain was, at this time, ruled by Sisebut,† an able and enlightened monarch, whose policy was directed to gain over the Roman provincials by peaceful measures, and his arms to conquer the remaining territories of the empire in the Peninsula. He soon reduced the imperial possessions to a small extent of coast on the ocean, embracing the modern province of Algarve, and a few towns on the shores of the Mediterranean. He likewise interrupted the communications between the Roman troops in Spain and Africa, by building a fleet, and conquering Tangiers and the neighbouring country. Heraclius concluded a treaty with Sisebut, in the year 614, and the Romans were thus enabled to retain their Spanish territories until the reign of Suintilla, who, while Heraclius was engaged in his Persian campaigns, finally expelled the Romans (or the Greeks, as they were generally termed in the West) from the Spanish continent.‡

\* PAUL. DIACONUS, iv. 21.

† A. D. 610 — 619.

‡ A. D. 623.

Seventy-nine years had elapsed since the Roman authority had been re-established in the south of Spain by the conquests of Justinian; and under the disadvantages to which the imperial power was exposed, the commercial superiority of the Greeks enabled them to preserve the Balearic Islands until a later period.\*

National distinctions and religious interests tended to divide the population, and to balance political power, much more in Italy than in the other countries of Europe. The influence of the church in protecting the people, the weakness of the Lombard sovereigns, from the small numerical strength of their native population, and the oppressive fiscal government of the Roman exarchs, gave the Italians the means of creating a national existence, amidst the conflicts of their masters. Yet, so imperfect was the unity of interests, or so great were the difficulties of communication between the people of various parts of Italy, that the imperial authority not only defended its own dominions with success against foreign enemies, but also repressed with ease the ambitious or patriotic attempts of the popes to acquire political power; punishing equally the seditions of the people, and the rebellions of the chiefs, who, like John Compso of Naples, and the Exarch Eleutherinus, aspired at independence.

Africa alone, of all the provinces of the empire,

\* Roman and Greek interests, and party feelings, continued to maintain some influence in the Peninsula for many years. In 673, the Duke Flavius Paulus, a provincial in the service of the Goths, almost succeeded in seizing the crown of Spain. *History of Spain and Portugal*, vol. i. 137. *Cabinet Cyclop.* ASCHBACH's *Geschichte der Westgothen*.

continued to use the Latin language in ordinary life; and its inhabitants regarded themselves, with some reason, as the purest descendants of the Romans. After the victories of John the Patrician, it had enjoyed a long period of tranquillity, and its prosperity was undisturbed by any spirit of nationality adverse to the supremacy of the empire, or by schismatic opinions hostile to the church. The barbarous tribes to the south were feeble enemies, and no foreign state possessed a naval force capable of troubling its repose, or interrupting its commerce. Under the able and fortunate administration of Heraclius and Gregoras, the father and uncle of the emperor, Africa formed the most flourishing portion of the empire. Its prosperous condition, and the wars raging in other countries, threw great part of the commerce of the Mediterranean into the hands of the Africans. Wealth and population increased to such a degree, that the naval expedition of the Emperor Heraclius, and the army of his cousin Nicetas, were fitted out from the resources of Africa alone. Another strong proof of the prosperity of the province, of its importance to the empire, and of its attachment to the interests of the Heraclian family, is afforded by the resolution which the emperor adopted, in the ninth year of his reign, of transferring the imperial residence from Constantinople to Carthage.

The immense population of Constantinople gave great inquietude to the government. Constantine the Great, in order to favour the increase of his new capital, had granted weekly allowances of grain to the possessors of houses. Succeeding emperors, for

the purpose of caressing the populace, and establishing a disposition on the part of those who dwelt around them, to flatter the imperial government, had largely increased the numbers of those entitled to this gratuity. In 618, the Persians overran Egypt, and by their conquest stopped the annual supplies of grain destined for the public distributions in the capital. Heraclius, pressed in his finances, but fearing to announce the discontinuance of these allowances, so necessary to keep the population of Constantinople in good humour, engaged to continue the supply, on receiving a payment of three pieces of gold from each claimant. His necessities, however, very soon became so great, that he ceased to continue the distributions, and thus defrauded those citizens of their money, whom fortune had deprived of their bread.\* The danger of his position must have been greatly increased by this bankruptcy, and the dishonour must have rendered his residence among the people whom he had deceived galling to his mind. Shame, therefore, may possibly have suggested to Heraclius the idea of quitting Constantinople; but his selection of Carthage, as the city to which he wished to transfer the seat of government, must have been determined by the wealth, population, and security of the African province. Carthage offered military resources for recovering possession of Egypt and Syria, of which we can only now estimate the extent, by taking into consideration the expedition that placed Heraclius himself on the throne. Many reasons

\* *Chronicon Paschale*, 389.

connected with the constitution of the civil government of the empire, might likewise be adduced as tending to influence the preference.

In Constantinople, an immense body of idle inhabitants had been collected, a mass that had long formed a burden on the state, and acquired a right to a portion of its resources. A numerous nobility, and a permanent imperial household, conceived, that they formed a portion of the Roman government, from the prominent part which they acted in the ceremonial that connected the emperor with the people. Thus, the great natural advantages of the geographical position of the capital were neutralized, by moral and political causes; while the desolate state of the European provinces, and the vicinity of the northern frontier, began to expose it to frequent sieges. As a fortress and place of arms, it might have still formed the bulwark of the empire in Europe; but while it remained the capital, its immense unproductive population required, that too large a part of the resources of the state should be devoted to its supply of provisions, to guard against the factions and the seditions of its populace, and to maintain in it a powerful garrison. The luxury of the Roman court had, during ages of unbounded wealth and unlimited power, assembled round the emperor an infinity of courtly offices, and caused an enormous expenditure, by a host of useless public employments, which it was extremely difficult to suppress.

No national feelings or particular line of policy connected Heraclius with Constantinople, and his long absence during the active years of his life

indicates, that, as long as his personal energy and health allowed him to direct the whole of the public administration, he considered the constant residence of the emperor in that city, as injurious to the general interests of the state. On the other hand, Carthage was, at this time, peculiarly a Roman city; and in actual wealth, in the numbers of its independent citizens, and in the activity of its whole population, was probably inferior to no city in the empire. It is not surprising, therefore, that Heraclius, when compelled to suppress the public distributions of grain in the capital, to retrench the expenditure of his court, and make many reforms in his civil government, should have wished to place the imperial treasury and his own resources in a place of greater security, before he engaged in his desperate struggle with Persia. The wish, therefore, to make Carthage the capital of the Roman empire, may, with far greater probability, be connected with the gallant project of his eastern campaigns, than serve as ground for a conjecture, that he was influenced by the cowardly or selfish motives attributed to him by the Byzantine writers.

When the project of Heraclius to remove to Carthage was generally known, the Greek patriarch, the Greco-Roman aristocracy, and the Byzantine people, became alarmed at the loss of power, wealth, public shows, and largesses consequent on the departure of the court; though it may be regarded as a doubtful question, whether the Roman empire and the Greek nation would not really have been gainers by the change. As far as Heraclius was personally concerned, the anxiety displayed by every

class to retain him, may have relieved his mind from the shame caused by his financial fraud; and as want of personal courage was certainly not one of his defects, he may have abandoned a wise resolution without much regret, if he had thought the enthusiasm which he witnessed likely to aid his military plans. The patriarch and the people, hearing that he had shipped his treasures, and prepared to follow with all the imperial family, assembled tumultuously, and induced the emperor to swear in the church of St Sophia, that he would defend the empire to his death, and regard the people of Constantinople as peculiarly the children of his throne.

Egypt, from its wonderful natural resources, and its numerous and industrious population, had long been the most valuable province of the empire. It yielded a very great portion of its gross produce into the imperial treasury; for its agricultural population being separated from all political power and influence, were compelled to pay, not only taxes, but a tribute, which may be viewed as a rent for the soil, to the Roman government. At this time, however, the wealth of Egypt was on the decline. The circumstances which had driven the trade of India to the north, had caused a great decrease in the demand for the grain of Egypt on the shores of the Red Sea, and for its manufactures, in Arabia and Abyssinia, or Ethiopia. The canal between the Nile and the Red Sea, whose existence is intimately connected with the prosperity of these countries, had been neglected during the government of Phocas. A large portion of the Greek population of Alexandria had been ruined, because

an end had been put to the public distributions of grain, and poverty had invaded the fertile land of Egypt. John the Almsgiver, who was patriarch in the reign of Heraclius, did every thing in his power to alleviate this misery. He established hospitals, and devoted the revenues of his see to charity; but he was an enemy to heresy, and, consequently, he was hardly looked on as a friend by the native population. National feelings, religious opinions, and local interests, had always nourished, in the minds of the native Egyptians, a deep-rooted hatred of the Roman administration, and of the Greek church; and this feeling of hostility only became more concentrated, after the union of the offices of prefect and patriarch by Justinian. A complete line of separation existed between the Greek colony of Alexandria and the native population; but the natives had, during the decline of the Greeks and Jews of Alexandria, intruded themselves into that city. The cause of the emperor was now connected with the commercial interests of the Greek and Melchite city, while the ruling classes in that city were, by the agricultural population of the rest of the province, regarded as interlopers on their sacred Jacobite soil.\* John the Almsgiver, though a Greek patriarch, and an imperial prefect, was not perfectly

\* The Melchites were those Christians in Syria and Egypt, who, though not Greeks, followed the doctrines of the Greek church. They were called Melchites (royalists, from Melcha, Syriac, a king) by their adversaries, by way of reproach, on account of their implicit obedience to the edict of Marcian, in favour of the council of Chalcedon. Jacob Baradæus, or Zanzalus, bishop of Edessa, the great heterodox apostle of the East, blended the various sects of Eutychians and Monophysites into a powerful church, whose followers were generally called, after his death, Jacobites. He died A. D. 578. — MOSHEIM'S *Ecclesiastical History*, (Murdoch's Am. ed.) i. 494.



free from the charge of heresy, nor, perhaps, of employing the revenues under his control with more attention to charity than to public utility. The exigencies of Heraclius were so great, that he sent his cousin, the Patrician Nicetas, to Egypt, in order to seize the immense wealth which the Patriarch John was said to possess. In the following year the Persians invaded the province; and the patrician and patriarch, unable to defend even the city of Alexandria, fled to Cyprus, while the enemy was allowed to ravage the valley of the Nile to the borders of Libya and Ethiopia, without meeting any opposition from the imperial forces, and apparently with the good wishes of the Egyptians. The plunder obtained from public property and slaves was immense; and as the power of the Greeks was annihilated, the native Egyptians availed themselves of the opportunity to acquire a dominant influence in the administration of their country.

For ten years the province owned allegiance to Persia, though it enjoyed a certain degree of doubtful independence under the immediate government of a native intendant-general of the land revenues, named Mokaukas, who subsequently, at the time of the Saracen conquest, occupied a conspicuous part in the history of his country. During the Persian supremacy, he became so influential in the administration, that he is styled by several writers the Prince of Egypt.\* Mokaukas, though under the

\* P. RAHEBI *Chronicon Orientale*, à J. S. Assemano, 85. ed. Venet. The mission of the Patrician Nicetas to seize the wealth of John the Charitable must have taken place before the year 616, as in that year he died on his

Roman government, had conformed to the established church, in order to hold an official situation, and was, like most of his countrymen, at heart a Monophysite, and consequently inclined to oppose the imperial administration, both from religious and political motives. Yet, it appears that a portion of the Monophysite clergy steadily refused to submit to the Persian government; and Benjamin, their patriarch, retired from his residence at Alexandria, when that city fell into the hands of the Persians, and did not return, until Heraclius had recovered possession of Egypt.\* Mokaukas established himself in the city of Babylon, or Misr, which had grown up, on the decline of Memphis, to be the native capital of the province, and the chief city in the interior.† The moment appears to have been extremely favourable for the establishment of an independent state by the Monophysite Egyptians, since, amidst the conflicts of the Persian and Roman empires, the immense revenues and supplies of grain formerly paid to the emperor, might have been devoted to the defence of the country. But the

way to Constantinople. Le Beau and Gibbon, on the authority of Baronius in his *Annales Ecclesiasticæ*, place this event in the year 620; but Petau, in his *Notes* to Nicephorus the Patriarch, had observed the anachronism of five years. *Ad Nicephoræ Breviar, Hist. Notæ*, 64. See also LE BEAU, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, xi. 53. GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall*, viii. 234, note. ASSEMANI, *Biblioth. Orient.* iv. 1. *Chronicon Orientale*, 126, ed. Venet.

\* *Chronicon Orientale*, 127. "Abfuit autem sede sua profugus per annos 13, decem scilicet sub imperio Heraclii quibus Persæ, Egyptum et Alexandriam possederant, et tres sub imperio Mohametanorum," &c. Yet, Benjamin is said to have been banished by Heraclius for ten years. RENAUDOT, *Historia Patriarchorum Alexandrinorum Jacobitorum*.

† Strabo (lib. xvii. c. 1. tom. iii. p. 447, ed. Tauch.) mentions Babylon as a fortified town, and one of the stations of the Roman garrison in Egypt. It occupied the site of Old Cairo, and is famous in the history and poetry of the middle ages. LE BEAU, xi. 277, notes de S. M.

native population appears, from the conduct of the Patriarch Benjamin, not to have been united in its views ; and probably the agricultural classes, though numerous, living in abundance, and firm in their Monophysite tenets, had not the knowledge necessary to aspire at national independence, the strength of character required to achieve it, nor the command of the precious metals necessary to purchase the service of mercenary troops and provide the materials of war. They had been so long deprived of all political rights, that they had probably adopted the opinion prevalent among the subjects of all despotic governments, that public functionaries are invariably knaves, and that the oppression of the native is more grievous than the yoke of a stranger. The moral defects of the people could certainly, at this favourable conjuncture, alone have prevented the establishment of an independent Egyptian and Jacobite state.

In Syria and Palestine, the different races who peopled the country were then, as in our own day, extremely divided ; and their separation, by language, manners, interests, and religion, rendered it impossible for them to unite, for the purpose of gaining any object opposed by the imperial government. The native Syrians, though they retained their language and literature, and shewed the strength of their national character by their opposition to the Greek church, were far from forming the majority of the inhabitants of the province. They were farther divided by their religious opinions ; for, though generally Monophysites, a part was attached to the Nestorian church, and the rest were Jacobites. The

Greeks appear to have formed the most numerous class of the population, though they were almost entirely confined within the walls of the cities. Many of them were, doubtless, the direct descendants of the colonies which had prospered and increased under the domination of the Seleucidæ. The protection and patronage of the civil and ecclesiastical administration of the eastern empire had preserved these Greek colonies separate from the natives, and supported them by a continual influx of Greeks engaged in the service of the church and state. But, though the Greeks probably formed the most numerous body of the population, yet the circumstance of their composing the ruling class in the land, united all the other classes in opposition to their authority. Being, consequently, deprived of the support of the agricultural population, and unable to recruit their numbers by an influx from their rural neighbours, they became more and more aliens in the country, and were alone incapable of offering a long and steady resistance to any foreign enemy, without the constant support of the imperial treasury and armies.

The Jews, whose religion and nationality have always supported one another, had, for more than a century, been increasing very remarkably, both in numbers and wealth, in every part of the civilized world. The wars and rivalry of the various nations, of conquerors, and of conquered people, in the south of Europe, had opened to the Jews a freedom of commercial intercourse with all parties, which each nation, moved by national jealousy, refused to its own neighbours, and only conceded to a foreign

people, of whom no political jealousy could be entertained. This circumstance explains the extraordinary increase in the number of the Jews, which becomes apparent, in the seventh century, in Greece, Africa, Spain, and Arabia, by referring it to the ordinary laws of the multiplication of the human species, when facilities are found for acquiring augmented supplies of the means of subsistence, without inducing us to suppose, that the Jews succeeded, during this period, in making more proselytes than at other times they had done. The increase of their numbers and wealth soon roused the bigotry and jealousy of the Christians; and the deplorable condition of the Roman empire, and of the Christian population in the East, inspired the Jews with some expectations of soon re-establishing their national independence, under the expected Messiah. It must be confessed, that the desire of availing themselves of the misfortunes of the Roman empire, and of the dissensions of the Christian church, was the natural consequence of the oppression to which they had long been subjected, and which it not unnaturally tended to increase.

It is said that about this time a prophecy was current, which declared that the Roman empire would be overthrown by a circumcised people. This report may have been spread by the Jews, in order to excite their own ardour, and assist their projects of rebellion; but the prophecy was saved from oblivion by the subsequent conquests of the Saracens, which could never have been foreseen by its authors. The conduct of the Jews excited the bigotry, as it may have awakened the fears, of the

imperial government, and both Phocas and Heraclius attempted to exterminate the Jewish religion, and thus put an end to their national existence.\* Heraclius not only practised every species of cruelty himself, to effect this object within the bounds of his own dominions, but he even made the forced conversion or banishment of the Jews, a prominent feature in his diplomacy. He consoled himself for the loss of most of the Roman possessions in Spain, by inducing Sisebut to insert an article in the treaty of peace concluded in 614, engaging to force baptism on the Jews; and he considered, that even though he failed in persuading the Franks to co-operate with him against the Avars, in the year 620, he had rendered the empire and Christianity some service by inducing Dagobert to join in the project of exterminating the unfortunate Jews.†

The other portions of the Syrian population, aspired at independence, though they did not openly venture to assert it; and during the Persian conquest, the coast of Phœnicia successfully defended itself under the command of its native chiefs.‡ At a later period, when the Mohammedans invaded the

\* EUTYCHII *Annales Ecclesiast. Alexand.* II., 216. 236. The number of the Jews at Tyre was 40,000. Their riches appear to have caused their oppression, and the tyranny of their rulers drove them to rebellion. The policy of Heraclius contrasts very unfavourably with that of the Gothic king, Theoderic the Great, who, about a century before, addressed the Jews of Genoa in these words, — “We cannot command religion, for no one can be compelled to believe if he be unwilling.” CASSIODORI *Var. lib. xii. c. ii. ep. 27.*

† There were still Christians who disapproved of the forced conversion of the Jews. Saint Isidore says, “Sisebutus Judæos ad fidem Christianam permovens æmulationem quidem Dei habuit, sed non scientiam.” ISIDOR. *HISP. CH. Goth.* See ASCHBACH'S *Geschichte der Westgothen.*

‡ ASSEMANI *Bib. Orient.* iii. 421. And his *Bibliotheca juris orientalis*, vol. vi. c. 20, p. 393.

province, many chiefs existed, who had attained a considerable degree of local power, and exercised an almost independent authority in their districts.\*

As the Roman administration grew weaker in Syria, and the Persian invasions became more frequent, the Arabs gradually acquired many permanent settlements amidst the rest of the inhabitants; and from the commencement of the seventh century, they must be reckoned as an important class of the population. Their power within the Roman provinces was increased by the existence of two independent Arab kingdoms in the neighbourhood, which had been formed in part from territories gained from the Roman and Persian empires. One of these kingdoms, called Ghassan, was the constant ally or vassal of the Romans; and the other called Hira, was equally attached to, or dependent on Persia. Both were Christian states, though the conversion of Hira took place not very long before the reign of Heraclius, and the greater part were Jacobites, mixed with some Nestorians.† It may be remarked, that the Arabs had been gradually advancing in moral and political civilization during the sixth century, and that their religious ideas had undergone a very great change. The decline of their powerful neighbours, had allowed them to increase the importance of the commerce which they retained in their own hands, and its extension gave them more enlarged views of their own importance, and suggested ideas of national unity which they had

\* OCKLEY'S *History of the Saracens*, i. 233; for Edessa, THEOPHANIS *Ch.* 283; and ABOU'LEBADI, *Ch. Syr.* 119.

† SALE'S *Preliminary Discourse to the Koran*, 30.

not previously entertained. These causes had produced powerful effects on the whole of the Arab population, during the century which preceded the accession of Heraclius; and it must not be overlooked, that Mohammed himself had at that period attained the age of forty.

The country between Syria and Armenia, or that part of ancient Chaldea which was subject to the Romans, had been so repeatedly laid waste during the Persian wars, that the agricultural population was nearly exterminated, or had retired into the Persian provinces. The inhabitants of no portion of the empire were so eager to throw off their allegiance, as the Chaldaic Christians, called by the Greeks, Nestorians, who formed the majority of the population of this country.\* They had clung firmly to the doctrine of the two natures of Christ, after its condemnation by the council of Ephesus, (A.D. 449,) and when they found themselves unable to contend against the temporal power and spiritual influence of the Greeks, they had established an independent church, which directed its attention, with great zeal, to the spiritual guidance of those Christians who dwelt beyond the limits of the Roman empire. The history of their missions, by which churches were

\* The Chaldaic Christians considered, and still consider, theirs the real apostolic church, though, like all other Christian churches, it partook largely of a national character. They used the Syriac language in public worship. Their patriarch resided at Seleucia, in Persia. He now resides at a monastery near Mossul. They had many bishops in Syria and Armenia, as well as in Mesopotamia. They were charged with confounding the divine and human natures of Christ, and they wished the Virgin Mary to be called the mother of Christ, not, as was then usual, the mother of God. They worshipped no images, so that their opinions appear to have influenced the Iconoclasts of a later period, and they venerated Nestorius.



established in India and China, is an extremely interesting portion of the annals of Christianity.\* Their zealous exertions, and their connection with the Christian inhabitants of Persia, induced the Roman emperors to persecute them with great cruelty, from political as well as religious motives; and this persecution often insured them the favour of the Persian monarchs. Though they did not always escape the bigotry and jealousy of the Persians, still they usually enjoyed equitable protection, and became active enemies both of the Greek church and the Roman empire, though the geographical position and physical configuration of their country, afforded them little hope of being able to gain political independence.†

Armenia was favourably situated for maintaining its independence, as soon as the Persian and Roman empires began to decline. Though the country was divided by these rival governments, the people had preserved their national character, manners, language, and literature, in as great a degree of purity as the Greeks themselves; and as their higher classes had retained more of wealth, military enterprize, and political independence, than the nobility of the other nations of the East, their services were very highly estimated by their neighbours. Their reputation for fidelity and military skill induced the Roman emperors, from the time of Justinian, to raise them to the highest

\* BLUMHARDT. *Versuch einer allgemeinen Missions geschichte der Kirche*, vol. iii.

† Elmacin says, that the Persians, on their conquest of Edessa, gave up all the churches to the Jacobites, who were very numerous. *Hist. Sarac.* 14.

offices in the empire. The Armenians were unable to defend their political independence against its two powerful enemies; but even after the Romans and Persians had divided their kingdom, they maintained their national existence unaltered; and, amidst all the convulsions which have swept over the face of Asia, they have continued to exist as a distinct people, and succeeded in preserving their language and literature. Their national spirit placed them in opposition to the Greek church, and they adopted the opinions of the Monophysites, though under modifications which gave to their church a national character, and separated it from that of the Jacobites. Their history is worthy of a more attentive examination than it has yet met with in English literature. Armenia was the first country in which Christianity became the established religion of the land; and the people, under the greatest difficulties, long maintained their independence with the most determined courage; and after the loss of their political power, they have defended their manners, language, religion, and national character with success, against Persians, Greeks, Saracens, and Turks.\*

Asia Minor had become the chief seat of the strength of the Roman empire in the time of Heraclius, whereof it was the only portion in which the great majority of the population was, at the same time, firmly attached to the

\* M. DE SAINT MARTIN, *Mémoires Historiques et Géographiques sur l'Arménie*, 2 vols. Paris, 1818; and numerous additions to the edition of LE BEAU, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, Paris, 1824, &c. 21 tomes, by the same author.

imperial government and to the Greek church. Before the Persian invasions, during the reign of Phocas, it had generally escaped any extensive devastation, so that it still retained much of its ancient wealth and splendour; and the social life of the people was still modelled on the institutions of the preceding ages. A considerable internal trade was carried on; and the great roads, being kept in a tolerable state of repair, served as arteries for the circulation of commerce and civilization. That it had, nevertheless, suffered very severely in the general decline, caused by over-taxation, and by reduced commerce, neglected agriculture, and diminished population, is attested by the magnificent ruins of cities destroyed at various periods, which lost their municipal liberties, and which, during no subsequent prosperity of the province, were ever constructed again.

The power of the central administration over its immediate officers, was almost as completely destroyed in Asia Minor, as in the more distant provinces of the empire. A remarkable proof of this general disorganization of the government, is found in the history of the early years of the reign of Heraclius; and one deserving particular attention, from its illustrating both his personal character, and the state of the empire. Crispus, the son-in-law of Phocas, had materially assisted Heraclius in obtaining the throne; and as a recompense, he received the administration of Cappadocia, one of the richest provinces of the empire, along with the chief command of the troops in his

government.\* Crispus, a man of influence, and of a daring heedless character, soon ventured to act, not only with independence, but even with insolence, towards the emperor.† He neglected the defence of his province; and when Heraclius visited Cesarea, to examine into its state, and prepare the means of carrying on the war against Persia in person, he displayed a spirit of insubordination, and an assumption of importance, which amounted to treason. Heraclius, who possessed the means of restraining his fiery temperament, visited the too powerful officer in his bed, which he kept under a slight or affected illness, and persuaded him to visit Constantinople. On his appearance in the senate, he was arrested, and compelled to become a monk. His authority and position rendered it absolutely necessary for Heraclius to punish his presumption, before he could advance with safety against the Persians. Many less important personages, in various parts of the empire, acted with equal independence, without the emperor's considering that it was either necessary to observe, or prudent to punish, their ambition. The decline of the power of the central government, the increasing ignorance of the people, the augmented difficulties in the way of communication, and the general insecurity of property and life, effected extensive changes in the state of society, and threw political influence into the hands of the local governors, of the

\* Justinian mentions the wealth and importance of Cappadocia. *Novell.* x. (30.)

† His character warrants Gibbon's conjecture, that he may have been the Priscus who figured in the reign of Maurice. *Decline and Fall*, viii. 26. note.

municipal and provincial chiefs, and of the whole body of the clergy.

SECTION VI.—CHANGE IN THE POSITION OF THE  
GREEK POPULATION, WHICH WAS PRODUCED BY  
THE SCLAVONIC ESTABLISHMENTS IN DALMATIA.

HERACLIUS appears to have formed the plan of establishing a permanent barrier in Europe, against the encroachments of the Avars and Sclavonians. For the furtherance of this project, it was evident that he could derive no assistance from the inhabitants of the provinces to the south of the Danube. The imperial armies, too, which, in the time of Maurice, had waged an active war in Illyria and Thrace, and frequently invaded the territories of the Avars, had melted away, during the disorders of the reign of Phocas. The loss was irreparable; for, in Europe, no agricultural population remained to supply the means of forming a body of local militia, or even a large force of irregular troops. The only feasible plan, for circumscribing the ravages of the northern enemies of the empire, which presented itself, was the establishment of powerful colonies, of tribes hostile to the Avars and their eastern Sclavonian allies, in the deserted provinces of Dalmatia and Illyria. To accomplish this object, Heraclius induced the Serbs, or western Sclavonians, who occupied the country about the Carpathian Mountains, and who had successfully opposed the extension of the Avar empire in that direction, to abandon their ancient seats, and move down to the

South, into the provinces between the Adriatic and the Danube. The Roman and Greek population of these provinces had been driven towards the sea coast, by the continual hostile incursions of the northern tribes, and the desolate plains of the interior had been occupied by a few Slavonian subjects and vassals of the Avars. The most important of the western Slavonian tribes who moved southward, were the Servians and Croatians, who settled in the countries still peopled by their descendants. Their original settlements were formed in consequence of friendly arrangements with Heraclius, and, doubtless, under the sanction of an express treaty; for the Slavonian people of Illyria and Dalmatia long regarded themselves as owing a certain degree of territorial allegiance to the eastern empire.\*

The measures of Heraclius were carried into execution with skill and vigour. From the borders of Istria, to the territory of Dyrrachium, the whole interior of the country was occupied by a variety of tribes of Servian, or western Slavonic origin, hostile to the Avars. These colonies, unlike the earlier invaders of the empire, were composed of agricultural communities; and to the facility which this circumstance afforded them of adopting into their political system any remnant of the old Slavonic population of their conquests, it seems just to attribute the permanency and prosperity of their settlements. Unlike the military races of Goths, Huns, and Avars, who had preceded them, the

\* CONST. PORPHYR. *De administrando imperio*, c. 31—36.

Servian nations increased and flourished in the lands which they had colonized ; and by the absorption of every relic of the ancient population, they formed political communities, and independent states, which offered a firm barrier to the Avars and other hostile northern nations.

It may here be observed, that if the original population of the countries colonized by the Servian nations, had, at an early period, been relieved from the weight of the imperial taxes, which encroached on their capital, and from the jealous oppression of the Roman government, which prevented their bearing arms ; in short, if they had been allowed to enjoy all the advantages which Heraclius was compelled to concede to the Servians, we may reasonably suppose that they could have successfully defended their country. But, amidst the ravages of the Goths, Huns, and Avars, the imperial tax-gatherers had never failed to enforce payment of the tribute as long as any thing remained undestroyed, though, according to the rules of justice, the Roman government had really forfeited its right to levy the taxes, as soon as it failed to perform its duty in defending the population.

The modern history of the eastern shores of the Adriatic commences with the relations established by Heraclius, with the Servian or western Slavonic nations, and the arrangements which induced them to form their settlements within the bounds of the eastern empire. Though, in a territorial point of view, vassals of the court of Constantinople, these colonies always preserved the most complete national independence, and formed their own political govern-

ments, according to the exigencies of their situation. The states which they constituted were of considerable weight in the history of Europe; and the kingdoms, or hannats, of Croatia, Servia, Bosnia, Rascia, and Dalmatia, occupied for some centuries a political position very similar to that now held by the secondary monarchical states of the present day. The people of Narenta, who enjoyed a republican form of government, once disputed the sway of the Adriatic with the Venetians; and, for some time, it appeared probable that these Servian colonies established by Heraclius were likely to take a prominent part in advancing the progress of European civilization.

But although the ancient provinces of Dalmatia, Illyricum, and Mœsia, received a new race of inhabitants, and new geographical divisions and names, still several fortified towns on the Adriatic continued to maintain their immediate connection with the imperial government, and preserved their original population, augmented by numbers of Roman citizens, whose wealth enabled them to escape from the Avar invasions and gain the coast. These towns long supported their municipal independence, by means of the commerce which they carried on with Italy, and defended themselves against their Servian neighbours, by the advantages which they derived from the vicinity of the numerous islands on the Dalmatian coast. For two centuries and a half, they continued, though surrounded by Servian tribes, to preserve their direct allegiance to the throne of Constantinople, until at length, in the reign of Emperor Basil, they were compelled to become tributary to their Scla-



vonian neighbours.\* Ragusa alone was able to secure its independence amidst all the vicissitudes of the surrounding countries, until its liberty was finally destroyed by the French, when the conquests of Napoleon annihilated the existence of most of the smaller European republics.

It seems hardly possible that the tribes of western Slavonians, who entered Dalmatia under the various names of Servians, Croatians, Narentins, Zachloumians, Terbounians, Diocleans, and Decatrians, constituted the whole stock of the population. Their numbers could hardly be sufficient to form more than the dominant race at the time of their arrival; and, depopulated as the country was, they must have found some remains of the primitive Slavonian people, who had inhabited the same countries from the earliest periods of history. The remnant of these ancient inhabitants would survive the miseries which exterminated their masters, and had doubtless mingled with the invaders of a kindred race from the northern banks of the Danube, who, ever since the reign of Justinian, had pushed their incursions into the empire. With these people the ruling class of Servian Slavonians would easily unite, without violating any national prejudice. The consequence was natural; the various branches of the population

\* A. D. 867 — 886. CONST. PORPHYR. *De adm. imp.* c. 30, (vol. iii. 147, ed. Bonn.) The small annual tribute paid by these towns to the eastern emperors, and afterwards to the Slavonian princes, may be considered as a proof of their poverty, on the one hand, or of their high value of money, and of their virtual independence, on the other. In either case, it is deserving of particular attention, as an illustration of the state of society. Aspalathus (Spálatra) paid 200 pieces of gold; Tetrangurium (Trau), Opsara, Arbe, Vekla, each 100; Jadera, which is represented by the modern Zara, 110; and Ragusa, for the rural district possessed by its citizens, 72.

were soon confounded, and their numbers rapidly increased as they melted into one people. The Romans, who at one period had formed a large portion of the inhabitants of these countries, gradually died out, while the Illyrians, who were the neighbours of the colonies to the south, were ultimately pushed down on that part of the continent formerly occupied by the Greeks.

From the settlement of the Servian Sclavonians within the bounds of the empire, we may therefore venture to date the earliest encroachments of the Illyrian or Albanian race, on the Hellenic population of the south. These Albanians or Arnauts, who are now called by themselves Skiptars, are supposed to be remains of the great Thracian race, which, under the names Getæ, Daci, Cimmerians, Phrygians, Lydians, Carians, Paionians, Epirots, and Macedonians, take an important part in early Grecian history.\* No distinct trace of the period at which they began to be co-proprietors of Greece with the Hellenic race, can be found in history; but it is evident, that at whatever time it occurred, the earliest Illyrian or Albanian colonists who settled among the Greeks, did so as members of the same political state, and of the same church; that they were influenced by precisely the same feelings and interests; and, what is even more remarkable, that their intrusion occurred under such circumstances, that no national prejudices or local jealousies were

\* The numbers of the Albanian race are at present estimated by Schafarik not to exceed one million and a half. The Wallachians, Moldavians, and Transylvanians, are composed of a mixture of the Dacian branch of this race, with Romans and Sclavonians. — SCHAFARIK, *Slavische Altherthümer*, Deutsch, von. M. von. Aehrenfeld, p. 31.

excited in the susceptible minds of the Greeks. A common calamity of no ordinary magnitude must have produced these wonderful effects; and it seems very difficult to trace back the history of the Greek nation, without suspecting that the germs of their modern condition, like those of their neighbours, are to be sought in the singular events which occurred in the reign of Heraclius.\*

The power of the Avar monarchy had already declined, but the prince or great khakan was still acknowledged as suzerain, from the frontiers of Bavaria to the Dacian Alps, which bound Transylvania and the Bannat, and as far as the shores of the Black Sea, about the mouth of the Danube. The Sclavonian, Bulgarian, and Hunnish tribes, which occupied the country between the Danube and the Wolga, and who had been the earliest subjects of the Avars in Europe, had begun to re-assert their independence. The actual numerical strength of the Avar nation had never been very great, and their barbarous government every where thinned the original population of the lands which they conquered. The remnant of the old inhabitants, driven, by poverty and desperation, to abandon all industrious pursuits, soon formed bands of robbers, and quickly became as

\* It is to be hoped that some of the learned Greek or German professors of the new University of Athens, may soon turn their attention to the examination of their modern ethnography. One of their first objects of investigation ought to be the history and language of the Albanians. Much may be gleaned from a critical inquiry into the language. Does it contain words evidently derived from the ancient language of Greece? Does it also contain others adopted after the Greek language had assumed its present form? Is there nothing in the frame-work of the Albanian language, which affords a clue to the period when the Greek words incorporated in it were adopted? These, and many other queries, might be proposed as worthy of investigation.

warlike and as numerous as the Avar troops stationed to awe the district. In a succession of skirmishes and desultory engagements, the Avars soon ceased to maintain their superiority, and the Avar monarchy fell to pieces with nearly as great rapidity as it had arisen. Yet, in the reign of Heraclius, the khakan could still assemble a variety of tribes under his standard, whenever he proposed to make a plundering expedition into the provinces of the empire.\*

It seems impossible to decide, from any historical evidence, whether the measures adopted by Heraclius to circumscribe the Avar power, by the settlement of the Servian Slavonians in Illyria, preceded or followed a remarkable act of treachery attempted by the Avar monarch against the emperor. If Heraclius had then succeeded in terminating his arrangements with the Servians, the dread of having their power reduced may have appeared to the Avars some apology for an attempt at treachery, too base even for the ordinary latitude of savage revenge and avidity. In the year 619, the Avars made a terrible incursion into the heart of the empire. They advanced so far into Thrace, that when Heraclius proposed a personal meeting with their sovereign, in order to arrange the terms of peace, Heraclea, (Perinthus,) on the Sea of Marmora, was selected as a convenient spot for the interview. The emperor advanced as far as Selymbria, accompanied by a brilliant train of attendants; and preparations were made to amuse the barbarians with a theatrical festival. The avarice of the Avars was excited, and

\* GEORGII PISIDÆ *Bellum Avaricum*, v. 197.

their sovereign, thinking that any act by which so dangerous an enemy as Heraclius could be removed was pardonable, determined to seize the person of the emperor, while his troops plundered the imperial escort. The great wall was so carelessly guarded, that large bodies of Avar soldiers passed it unnoticed or unheeded ; but their movements at last awakened the suspicion of the court, and Heraclius was compelled to fly in disguise to Constantinople, leaving his tents, his theatre, and his household establishment, to be pillaged by his treacherous enemies. The followers of the emperor were pursued to the very walls of the capital, and the crowd assembled to grace the festival, became the slaves of the Avars, who carried off an immense booty, and two hundred and seventy thousand prisoners.\* The weakness of the empire was such, that Heraclius considered it politic to overlook even this insult, and instead of attempting to efface the stain on his reputation, which his ridiculous flight could not fail to produce, he allowed the affair to pass unnoticed. He continued to occupy himself in completing the operations necessary for attacking Persia, as it was evident, that the fate of the Roman empire depended on the success of the war in Asia. To secure himself as much as possible from any diversion in Europe, he condescended to renew his negotiations with the Avars, and by making many sacrifices, he succeeded in concluding a peace on what he vainly hoped might prove a lasting basis.

Several years later, however, when Heraclius was

\* NICEPHORUS, *De rebus post Mauricium gestis*, p. 10.

absent on the frontiers of Persia, the Avars considered the moment favourable for renewing hostilities, and formed the project of attempting the conquest of Constantinople, in conjunction with a Persian army, which advanced to the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus.\* The khakan of the Avars, with a powerful army of his own subjects, aided by bands of Slavonians, Bulgarians, and Huns, attacked the capital by land, while the Persian army endeavoured to afford him every possible assistance. Their combined attacks were defeated by the garrison of Constantinople, without Heraclius' considering it necessary to retrace his steps, or turn back from his career of conquest in the East. The naval superiority of the Roman government prevented the junction of its enemies, and the Avars were at last compelled to effect a precipitate retreat. This siege of Constantinople is the last memorable exploit of the Avar nation recorded by the Byzantine historians; their power rapidly declined, and the people soon became so completely lost amidst the Slavonian and Bulgarian inhabitants of their dominions, that an impenetrable veil is now cast over the history of their race and language. The Bulgarians, who had already acquired some degree of power, began to render themselves the ruling people among the Hunnish nations between the Danube and the Don; and, from this time, they appear in history as the most dangerous enemies of the Roman empire on its northern frontier.

\* A. D. 626.

Before Heraclius commenced the arrangements, by which he induced the western Slavonians to settle in Illyria, numerous bodies of the Avars, and the Slavonic subjects, had already penetrated into Greece, and established themselves, even as far south as the Peloponnesus.\* No very precise evidence of the extent to which the Avars succeeded in pushing their conquests in Greece, can now be obtained; but there are strong testimonies, which establish with certainty, that their Slavonic subjects retained possession of these conquests for upwards of two centuries. The political and social condition of these Slavonic colonies on the Hellenic soil, utterly escapes the research of the historian; but their power and influence in Greece was, for a long time, very great. The passages of the Greek writers which refer to these conquests are so scanty, and so vague in expression, that it becomes the duty of the modern historian to pass them in review, particularly since it has been maintained, with much ability, by a German writer, that "the Hellenic race in Europe has been exterminated," and that this extermination took place in consequence of the Slavonic invasions.† This opinion, it is true, has been combated with great learning by one of his countrymen, who asserts, that the ingenious dissertation of his predecessor is nothing more than a plausible theory.‡ We must attempt to examine for ourselves the facts which history

\* LEAKE's *Researches in Greece*, 376. *Tafel de Thessalonica proleg.* lxxviii. lxxxvii. 70. THEOPHANIS *Ch.* 385.

† *Geschichte der halbinsel Morea während des Mittelalters*, von Prof. FALLMERAYER, preface, and p. 179—199.

‡ *Geschichte Griechenlands*, von J. W. ZINKEISEN, p. 837.

records, and trace the scanty records of historical truth during this dark period.

The earliest mention of the Avar conquests in Greece, occurs in the Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius of Epiphania in Cœle-Syria, who wrote at the end of the sixth century.\* He mentions, that while the forces of the Emperor Maurice were engaged in the East, the Avars advanced to the great wall before Constantinople, captured Singidon Auchialus, and all Greece, and laid waste every thing with fire and sword.† These incursions took place in the years 588 and 589, but no inference could be drawn, from this vague and incidental notice of an Avar plundering incursion so casually mentioned, in favour of a permanent settlement of the Sclavonians in Greece, had this passage not received considerable importance from later authorities. It must, however, be particularly noticed, that Theophylactus Simocatta, who describes the wars of the Emperor Maurice with the Avars at great length, makes no mention of any Avar expedition into Greece. There exists, however, a letter of the patriarch of Constantinople, Nicolaus, to the Emperor Alexius Comnenus, in the year 1081, which confirms the statement of Evagrius in a very remarkable way.‡ The patriarch mentions, that the Emperor Nicephones (A. D. 802—811) had

\* His history ends with the year 593, and he is supposed to have died not long afterwards.

† EVAGRII *Hist. Eccles.* vi. 10. cum adnotat. Valesii. An inhabitant of Syria may be excused for using Greece, as meaning the European portion of the empire. The word Romania was not then in existence. GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall*, viii. 144. *Tafel Thessalonica proleg.* lxx. ZINKEISEN, 699. FALLMERAYER, i. 185.

‡ LEUNCLAVIUS, *Jus Græco-Romanum*, i. 278.



granted various concessions to the episcopal see of Patras, in consequence of the miraculous aid which Saint Andrew had afforded that city in destroying the Avars, who had held possession of the greater part of the Peloponnesus for two hundred and eighteen years, and had so completely separated their conquests from the Roman empire, that no Roman (that is to say Greek) dared to enter the country. Now this siege of Patras is mentioned by Constantine Porphyrogennitas, and its date is fixed in the year 807; consequently, these Avars, who had conquered the Peloponnesus two hundred and eighteen years before that event, must have arrived precisely in the year 589, at the very period indicated by Evagrius.\* The Emperor Constantine Porphyrogennitas, repeatedly mentions the Slavonic colonies in the Peloponnesus, though he never affords any accurate information concerning the period at which they entered the country. In his work on the provinces of the empire, he informs us, that the whole country was subdued, and rendered barbarous, after the great plague in the reign of Constantine Copronymus, an observation which seems to imply that the political power of the Slavonic colonies, and their assumption of total independence in Greece, arose about that period.† It is evident that they acquired great power, and had become an object of alarm to the emperors, a few years later. In the reign of Constantine the Sixth, an expedition, under the command of Stauracius, was sent against them, at a time when they possessed great part of

\* CONSTANTINUS PORPHYR. *De adm. imp.* c. 49. iii. 217. ed. Bonn.

† A. D. 746. CONST. PORPHYR. *De thematibus.* ii. c. 6.

the country, from the frontiers of Macedonia, to the southern limits of the Peloponnesus.\* Indeed, the fortified town and mountain districts alone appear to have remained in the possession of the Greeks. †

It seems surprising, that no detailed account of the important change in the condition and fortunes of the Greek race, which these facts imply, is contained in the Byzantine historians. Yet, when we reflect on the probability, that these Slavonic colonies never united into one state, nor pursued any fixed line of policy in their attacks on the empire, and when we recall to mind also, that the Byzantine historians occupied themselves so little with the real history of mankind, as to pass over the Lombard invasion of Italy without notice, our wonder must cease. It must be noticed also, that all the Greek writers who mention this period of history, were men connected either with the Constantinopolitan government, or with the orthodox church; and that, consequently, they were destitute of every feeling of Greek nationality, and viewed the inhabitants of Achæa, or ancient Hellas, as a rude and degenerate race of semibarbarians, little superior to the Slavonians, with whom they were carrying on a desultory but mortal warfare. As comparatively little revenue could, in the time of Heraclius, be drawn from Greece, that emperor never seems to have occupied himself about its fate; and the Greeks escaped the extermination with which they were threatened by

\* A. D. 783. THEOPHANIS *C.* 385. See also the *Epitome* to Strabo, in the edition of Almcloveen. Amst. 1707, pp. 1251 — 1261.

† Joannina maintained itself always as a Greek city. LEAKE'S *Travels in Northern Greece*, iv. 202.

their Avar and Slavonian invaders, in consequence of their own resources and exertions, and not from any assistance afforded them by the imperial government. The Avars made considerable exertions to complete the conquest of Greece, and, attempting to carry their predatory expeditions into the Archipelago, they attacked the eastern coast of Greece, which had hitherto been secure from their invasions. In order to execute this design, they obtained shipbuilders from the Lombards, and launched a fleet of plundering barks, in the Ægean Sea. The general danger of the island, and of the commercial cities of Greece, roused the spirit of the inhabitants, who united for the defence of their property, and the plans of the Avars proved unsuccessful.\* The Greeks, however, were long exposed to the plundering Slavonians on one side, and to the rapacity of the imperial government on the other; and their success in preserving some portion of their commercial wealth and political influence, is a remarkable proof of the excellence of their municipal organization.

SECTION VII. — INFLUENCE OF THE CAMPAIGNS OF  
HERACLIUS IN THE EAST ON THE GREEKS.

THE personal character of Heraclius must have exercised great influence on the events of his reign. Unfortunately, the historians of his age have not conveyed to posterity any very accurate picture of

\* PAULUS DIACONUS, *De gestis Langob.* iv. 21. *Tafel Thessalonica proleg.* lxxiii. lxxix.

the peculiar traits of his mind. His conduct shews that he possessed judgment, activity, and courage; and though he was sometimes imprudent and rash, at others he displayed an equanimity, and force of character in repressing his passion, which mark him to have been really a great man.\* In the opinion of his cotemporaries, his fame was sullied by two indelible stains. His marriage with his niece Martina was regarded as incestuous; and his attempt to impose his own religious opinions on his subjects, as the rule of the orthodox faith of the established church, branded him as a heretic. Both were perhaps errors of policy, in a prince who was so dependent on public opinion for support in his great scheme of restoring the lost power of the Roman empire; yet the constancy of his affection for his wife, and the immense importance of reconciling all the adverse sects of Christians within the empire, in common measures of defence against external enemies, may form some apology for these errors. The patriarch of Constantinople remonstrated against his marriage with his niece; but the power of the emperor was still absolute over the persons of the ecclesiastical functionaries of the empire, and Heraclius, though he allowed the bishop to satisfy his conscience by stating his objections, commanded him to practise his civil duties

\* His cruelty to Phocas only proves, that he partook of the barbarous feelings of his age. A religious strain runs through his letters, which are preserved in the *Paschal Chronicle*, and in the speeches reported by Theophanes, which have an air of authenticity. It is true, that this style may have been adopted as the official language of an emperor, who felt himself so peculiarly the head of the Christian church, and the champion of the orthodox faith. Persia was his ecclesiastical as well as his political enemy.

and celebrate the marriage of his sovereign. The pretensions of papal Rome had not yet arisen in the Christian church.\* The Patriarch Sergius does not appear to have been deficient in zeal or courage, and Heraclius was not free from the religious bigotry of his age. Both knew that the established church was a part of the state, and that though, in matters of doctrine, the general councils put limits to the imperial authority, yet, in the executive direction of the clergy, the emperor was nearly absolute, and possessed full power to remove the patriarch, had he ventured to disobey his orders. As the marriage of Heraclius with Martina was within the prohibited degrees, it seems to have been an act of unlawful compliance on the part of Sergius to celebrate the nuptials, for the duty of the patriarch as a priest, was surely, in such a case, of more importance than his obedience as a subject.

The early part of the reign of Heraclius was devoted to reforming the administration and recruiting the army. He tried every means of obtaining peace with Persia in vain, and even allowed the senate to make an independent attempt to enter into negotiations with Chosroes.† For twelve years, the Persian armies ravaged the empire almost without encountering any opposition, from the banks of the Nile to the shores of the Bosphorus. It is impos-

\* The power of Gregory the Great was so small, that he durst not consecrate a bishop without the consent of his enemy the Emperor Maurice; and he was forced to obey the edict forbidding all persons to quit public employments in order to become monks, and prohibiting soldiers during the period of their service from being received into monasteries. FLEURY, *Hist. Ecclesiast.* l. 35, 50; 36, 43.

† *Chronicon Paschale*, 387.

sible to explain in what manner Heraclius employed his time during this interval, but it is evident that he was engaged by many cares besides those of preparing for his war with Persia. The independent negotiation which the senate attempted with Persia, seems to indicate, that the Roman aristocracy had succeeded in encroaching on the emperor's authority in the general confusion which reigned in the administration ; and that he may have been occupied in a political contest at home, before he could attend either to the exigencies of the Avar or the Persian wars. As no civil hostilities appear to have broken out, the circumstance is not recorded in the meagre chronicles of his reign. This may perhaps seem a random conjecture, which ought not to find a place in a historical work ; but when the state of the Roman administration at the close of the reign of Heraclius, is compared with the confusion in which he found it at his accession, it is evident, that he had succeeded in effecting a great political change, and in infusing new vigour into the weakened fabric of the government.

When Heraclius had settled the internal affairs of his empire, filled his military chest, and re-established the discipline of the Roman armies, he commenced a series of campaigns, which entitle him to rank as one of the greatest military commanders whose deeds are recorded in history.\* The great object which he

\* The industry of Le Beau, the learning of Gibbon, and the sagacity of D'Anville, have been employed in illustrating the chronology and geography of the campaigns of Heraclius ; but something still requires to be done to enable us to follow his steps with certainty, and the labour of a modern scholar might be advantageously bestowed on this interesting period. The Persians took Ancyra and Rhodes during the first campaign. ELMACIN, p. 11.

proposed to himself in his first campaign, was to render himself master of a line of communications extending from the shores of the Black Sea, to those of the Mediterranean, and resting on positions in Pontus and Cilicia.\* The Persian armies, which had advanced into Asia Minor, would, by this manœuvre, be separated from their supplies and reinforcements on their own frontiers, and Heraclius had it in his power to attack their troops in detail. The rapidity of his movements rendered his plan successful; the Persians were compelled to fight in the positions chosen by Heraclius, and were completely defeated. In the second campaign, the emperor pushed forward into the heart of Persia from his camp in Pontus.† Gauzac (Tauris) was captured; Thebarnes, the birth-place of Zoroaster, with its temple and fire-altars, was destroyed; and it was shewn to the world that the Persian empire was in the same state of internal weakness as the Roman, and equally incapable of offering any popular or national resistance, to an active and enterprising enemy.‡ The third and fourth campaigns were occupied in laborious marches and severe battles, in which Heraclius proved himself both a brave soldier

ABOU'LFARADJ, *Cb. Syr.* 160. Theophanes (*Chron.* 253) places their capture in the same year as the Avar treason.

\* A. D. 622.

† A. D. 623.

‡ Gibbon countenances the opinion that Heraclius penetrated as far as Ispahan, but this rests on a very doubtful conjecture, viii. 242. In order to gain allies against Persia, Heraclius promised his daughter in marriage to the son of the king, or chief, of the Khazars, a Turkish tribe who were, for some centuries, powerful in the countries between the Black Sea and the Caspian. LE BEAU, xi. 115, n. de S. M.

A senator of Rome, while Rome survived,  
Would not have match'd his daughter with a king.

and an able general. Under his guidance, the Roman troops recovered all their ancient superiority in war. The fifth campaign was at first suspended by the diversion which the Persians effected, in pushing forward an army to the shores of the Bosphorus, in order to assist the Avars in the siege of Constantinople. But as soon as Heraclius was assured that the attempt on his capital had failed, he hastened to advance into the very heart of the Persian empire, and to seek his rival in his palace. The sixth campaign opened with the Roman army in the plains of Assyria; and, after laying waste some of the richest provinces of the Persian empire, Heraclius marched through the country to the east of the Tigris, and captured the palace of Dastargerd, where the Persian monarchs had accumulated the greatest part of their enormous treasures, in a position always regarded as secure from any foreign enemy. Chosroes fled at the approach of the Roman army, and his flight became a signal for the rebellion of his generals. Heraclius pushed forward to within a few miles of Ctesiphon, and then found that his success would be more certain by watching the civil dissensions of the Persians, than by risking an attack on the populous capital of their empire with his diminished army. Chosroes was soon seized and murdered by his rebellious son Siroes, and a treaty of peace was concluded with the Roman emperor. The ancient frontiers of the two empires were re-established, and the holy cross, which the Persians had carried off from Jerusalem, was restored to Heraclius, with the seals of the case which contained it unbroken.

Heraclius had repeatedly declared that he did not



desire to make any conquest of the Persian territory.\* His conduct when success had crowned his exertions, and when his enemy was ready to purchase his retreat at any price, proves the sincerity and justice of his policy. This empire required not only a lasting peace to recover from the miseries of the late war, but also many reforms in the civil and religious administration, in order to restore the vigour of the government. Twenty-four years of war, which had proved, in turns, unsuccessful to every nation engaged in it, had impoverished and diminished the population of a great part of Europe and Asia. Public institutions and buildings, roads, ports, and commerce, had fallen into decay; the physical power of governments had declined; and the utility of a central political authority became less and less apparent to mankind. Even the religious opinions of the subjects of the Roman and Persian empires had been shaken, by the misfortunes which had happened to what each sect regarded as the talisman of its faith. The ignorant Christians viewed the capture of Jerusalem, and the loss of the holy cross, as indicating the wrath of heaven and the downfall of religion; and the fire-worshippers considered the destruction of Thebarnes, and the extinction of the sacred fire, as an irreparable evil, and ominous of the annihilation of every good principle on earth. Both the Persians and the Christians had so long regarded their faith as a portion of the state, and reckoned political and military power as the inseparable allies of their ecclesiastical esta-

\* *Chronicon Paschale*, 401.

blishments, that they considered religious misfortune as a proof of divine reprobation of their national cause.

The fame of Heraclius would have rivalled that of Alexander, Hannibal, or Cæsar, had he expired at Jerusalem, after the successful termination of the Persian war. He had established peace throughout the empire, restored the organization of the Roman government, revived the power of Christianity in the East, and replanted the holy cross on Mount Calvary. His glory admitted of no addition, but unfortunately, his conduct during the succeeding years of his reign has, in the general opinion, tarnished his frame. Yet these years were devoted to many arduous labours; and it is to the wisdom with which the emperor restored the strength of his government during this time of peace, that we must attribute the energy of the Asiatic Greeks who arrested the great tide of Mohammedan conquest, at the foot of Mount Taurus. Though the military glory of Heraclius was obscured by the brilliant victories of the Saracens, still, his civil administration ought to receive its meed of praise, when we compare the resistance made by the empire which he re-organized, with the religious enthusiasts, who extended their conquests, with incredible rapidity, from India to Spain.

The policy of Heraclius was directed to the establishment of a bond of union, which would connect all the provinces of his empire into one body, and he hoped to replace the want of national unity by identity of religious belief. The church was far more closely connected with the people than any other institution, and the emperor, as political head of the church, hoped to direct a well organized body

of churchmen. But Heraclius engaged in the impracticable task of imposing a rule of faith on his subjects, without assuming the office, or claiming the authority of a prophet or a saint. His measures, consequently, like all ecclesiastical and religious reforms, which are adopted solely from political motives, only produced additional discussions. In the year 630, he propounded the doctrine "that in Christ, after the union of the two natures, there was but one will and one operation." Without gaining over any great body of the schismatics whom he wished to restore to the communion of the established church, by this new rule of faith, he was himself generally stigmatized as a heretic. The epithet monothelite was applied to him and to his doctrine, to shew that neither was orthodox. In the hope of putting an end to the disputes which he had rashly awakened, he again, in 639, attempted to legislate for the church, and published his celebrated *Ecthesis*, which, though it attempts to remedy the effects of his prior proceedings, by forbidding all controversy on the question of the single or double operation of the will in Christ, nevertheless includes a declaration in favour of unity.\* The bishop of Rome, already aspiring after an increase of his spiritual authority, though perhaps not yet contemplating the possibility of perfect independence, entered actively into the opposition excited by the publication of the *Ecthesis*, and was supported by a considerable party in the eastern or Greek church, while he directed the proceedings of the whole of the western clergy.

\* The *Ecthesis* is contained in HARDOUN's *Concilia*, tom. ii. 791.

On a careful consideration of the religious position of the empire, it cannot appear surprising that Heraclius should have endeavoured to reunite the Nestorians, Eutychians, and Jacobites, to the established church, particularly when we remember how closely the influence of the church was connected with the administration of the state, and how completely religious passions replaced national feelings, in these secondary ages of Christianity. The union was an indispensable step to the re-establishment of the imperial power, in the provinces of Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Armenia; and it must not be overlooked, that the theological speculations and ecclesiastical reforms of Heraclius, were approved of by the wisest councillors whom he had been able to select to aid him in the government of the empire. The state of society required some strong remedy, and Heraclius only erred in adopting the plan which had always been practically pursued by absolute monarchs, namely, that of making the sovereign's opinion the rule of conduct for his subjects. We can hardly suppose that Heraclius would have succeeded better, had he assumed the character, or deserved the veneration due to a saint. The marked difference which existed between the higher and educated classes in the East, and the ignorant and superstitious populace, rendered it next to impossible, that any line of conduct could secure the judgment of the learned, and awaken the fanaticism of the people. As a farther apology for Heraclius, it may be noticed, that his acknowledged power over the orthodox clergy was much greater than that which was possessed by the Byzantine emperors at a later period, or that

which was ever admitted by the Latin Church after its separation. In spite of all the advantages which he possessed, his attempt ended in a most signal failure; yet no experience would ever induce his successors to avoid his error. His effort to strengthen his power, by establishing a principle of unity, aggravated all the evils which he intended to cure; for while the Monophysites and the Greeks were as little disposed to unite as ever, the authority of the eastern church, as a body, was weakened by the creation of a new schism, and the incipient divisions between the Greeks and the Latins, assuming a national character, began to prepare the way for the separation of the Greek and Papal churches.

While Heraclius was endeavouring to restore the strength of the empire in the East, by attempting to enforce unity of religious views, — the pursuit of which has ever been one of the greatest errors of the human mind, — Mohammed, by a juster application of the aspiration of mankind after unity, had succeeded in uniting Arabia into one state, and in persuading it to adopt one religion. The force of this new empire of the Saracens was directed against those provinces of the Roman empire, which Heraclius had been anxiously endeavouring to reunite in spirit to his government. The difficulties of the administration of these provinces had compelled the emperor to fix his residence for some years in Syria, and he was well aware of all the uncertainty of their allegiance, before the Saracens commenced their invasion.\* The successes of the Mohammedan

\* Heraclius resided almost entirely in the East, from A. D. 629, to 634.

arms, and the early retreat of the emperor, carrying off with him the holy cross from Jerusalem, have induced historians to suppose, that his latter years were spent in sloth, and marked by weakness.\* His health, however, was in so precarious a state, that he could no longer direct the operations of his army in person; at times, indeed, he was incapable of all bodily exertion.† Yet, the resistance which the Saracens encountered in Syria, was very different from the ease with which it had been overcome by the Persians at the commencement of the emperor's reign, and attests, that his administration had not been without fruit. Many of his reforms could only have been effected after the conclusion of the Persian war, when he recovered possession of Syria and Egypt. He seems, indeed, never to have omitted an opportunity of strengthening his position; and when a chief of the Huns or Bulgarians threw off his allegiance to the Avars, Heraclius is recorded to have immediately availed himself of the opportunity to form an alliance, in order to circumscribe the power of his dangerous northern enemy. Unfortunately, few traces can be gleaned from the Byzantine writers, of the precise acts by which he effected his reforms; and the most remarkable facts, illustrating the political history of the time, must be collected from incidental notices, preserved in the treatise of the Emperor Constantine Porphyro-

\* GIBBON, *Decline and Fall*, ix. 418. LE BEAU, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, xi. 173.

† NICEPHORUS CAPOLITANUS, 17. OCKLEY's *History of the Saracens*, i. 271. The idle story of the Arabian historian, mentioned by Ockley, confirms the account of the Patriarch Nicephorus, and shews that the health of Heraclius had declined before he quitted Syria.

gennitas, concerning the administration of the empire, written for the instruction of his son Romanus, in the middle of the tenth century.\*

Though Heraclius failed in gaining over the Syrians and Egyptians; yet he succeeded completely in reuniting the Greeks of Asia Minor to his government, and in attaching them to the empire. His success may be estimated from the failure of the Saracens in their attacks on the population of this province. The moment the Mohammedan armies were compelled to rely on their military skill and religious enthusiasm, and were unable to derive any profit from the hostile feeling of the inhabitants to the imperial government, their career of conquest was checked; and almost a century before Charles Martel stopped their progress in the west of Europe, the Greeks had arrested their conquests in the East, by the steady resistance which they offered in Asia Minor.

The difficulties of Heraclius were very great. The Roman armies were still composed of a rebellious soldiery collected from many discordant nations; and the only leaders whom the emperor could venture to trust with important military commands, were his immediate relations, like his brother Theodore and his son Constantine, or soldiers of fortune, who could not aspire at the imperial dignity, like the Armenian general Vahan.† All these commanded in Syria against the Saracens at different periods. The

\* Published in *Banduri Imperium Orientale*, fol. Paris, 1711. tom. i. and in the third volume of the Bonn edition of the works of Constantine Porph.

† THEOPHANIS *Chron.* 280. EUTYCHIUS, ii. 273. ELMACIN, *Hist. Sarac.* 26.

apostacy and treachery of a considerable number of the Roman officers in Syria, warranted Heraclius in regarding the defence of that province as utterly hopeless; but the meagre and ill-informed historians of his reign can hardly be received as conclusive authorities, to prove that on his retreat he displayed an unseemly despair, or a criminal indifference. The fact that he carried the holy cross, which he had restored to Jerusalem, along with him to Constantinople, attests that he had lost all expectation of defending the Holy City; but his exclamation of "Farewell, Syria!" was doubtless uttered in the bitterness of his heart, on seeing a great part of the labours of his life for the restoration of the Roman empire utterly vain. The disease which had long undermined his constitution, put an end to his life about six years after his return to Constantinople. He died in March, 641, after one of the most remarkable reigns recorded in history, chequered by the greatest successes and reverses. During his reign, the social condition of mankind underwent a considerable change, and the earliest germs of modern society began to be formed; yet there is, unfortunately, no period of man's annals covered with greater obscurity.

#### SECTION VIII.—CONDITION OF THE NATIVE POPULATION OF GREECE.

THE history of the Greeks who continued to inhabit their native European provinces becomes, after the reign of Justinian, extremely obscure. Yet



this period is one of great interest in the history of the Hellenic race, which was reduced, like most of the other nations around, to struggle hard to escape extermination from invaders far inferior in power and civilization. It has been already mentioned, that the Avar and Sclavonian tribes had penetrated into Greece in considerable numbers, and effected settlements in many districts, from which they waged a perpetual war with the Greeks. Unable to live in the state of misery and destitution to which the agricultural classes were now reduced in Europe, the Greek population confined itself to the towns where they could carry on trade or commerce, or to those districts which were safe from intrusion.

The countries to the north of Epirus and Macedonia had always effectually resisted the influence of Greek civilization; and even when the population of Greece was increasing with the greatest rapidity, and while colonies were multiplied in every land, from Sicily to the Tauric Chersonese, the Greeks were unable to press back towards the north, the population of these countries. Yet these lands have, from the earliest times, lain open to constant invasion and emigration.\* In the time of Maurice, the language of the Thracians had a much stronger resemblance to Latin than to Greek, and indeed Latin appears to have mixed more easily than Greek, with the native dialects of all the nations on the northern limits of the Hellenic race.† But,

\* From the time of the Celts to that of the Turks. NIEBUHR's *Kleine Schriften*, 375.

† "Ἑσπερος προσφωνεῖ τῇ πατρὶά φωνῇ, τόσσα ζεῖται. THEOPHANIS CΑ. 218. THEOPHYLACTI SIM. ii. 15. This was the language of the Muleteers.

though the Greeks, at the height of their power, could make no impression on these northern neighbours, yet, when Greece became depopulated, numerous colonies from the north settled in the ancient seats of the Hellenic race, and the slave population of Attica and Laconia were replaced by tribes of Epirot or Albanian peasants, whose descendants regarded themselves as the original natives of the soil.

It is impossible to trace with accuracy the effects of the depopulation of Greece, and of the poverty of the inhabitants. No description could exaggerate the sufferings of a country in a similar situation.\* The slave population, which had formerly laboured for the wealthy, had now disappeared, and the free labourer had sunk into a serf. The uncultivated plains were traversed by armed bands of Slavonians, who gradually settled, in great numbers, in Thessaly and Macedonia. The cities of Greece ceased to receive the usual supplies of agricultural produce from the country, and even Thessalonica, with its fertile territory and abundant pastures, was dependent on foreign importation for relief from

\* Niebuhr thus describes the effects of the wars of Napoleon in Germany : " Whole villages have entirely disappeared ; and in many, which are not altogether gone, the population is entirely, or almost entirely, destroyed by plunder, famine, and disease. The towns, part of which are in ashes, are equally desolate ; and every inhabitant is sunk nearly to the same state of poverty. Almost all the landowners are bankrupt, and there has been a total change in the property of the soil — a great misfortune, for the rich who spring up out of war and want are sure to be the very worst of their class." *Lebens nachrichten über B. G. NIEBUHR*, 424. In order to form some idea of the state of Greece, add to this picture the difference between a declining and advancing state of society, and between the French of the nineteenth century and the Avars and Slavonians of the seventh.

famine.\* The smaller cities, destitute of the same advantages of situation, would naturally be more exposed to depopulation, and sink more rapidly to decay. The roads, after the seizure of the local funds of the Greek cities by Justinian, were allowed to go to ruin, and the transport of provisions by land, in a country like Greece, became difficult. This neglect of the roads had always been a cause of the poverty and barbarism of the mountainous districts in the Roman empire, whenever it happened that they were not traversed by one of the great military lines of communication.

A complete opposition of feelings and interests began to separate the inhabitants of Greece, and the Greek population of Constantinople connected with the imperial administration, and this circumstance warrants us in fixing on the reign of Heraclius as the period at which the ancient existence of the Hellenic race terminates. It is vain to attempt to fix with accuracy the precise time at which the ancient usages were allowed, one by one, to expire, for no change in social life which is long in progress, can be considered as really accomplished, until the existence of a new order of things can be distinctly pointed out. National transitions can rarely be effected in one generation, and are often not completed in a century. But when the Byzantine writers, after the time of Heraclius, find it necessary to make mention of the Greeks of Hellas and Peloponnesus, they do so with feelings of aversion. This

\* *Tafel de Thessalonica ejusque agro. proleg. lxxviii.*

display of ill will induces us to conjecture that the fate of the Greek cities engaged in resisting the Sclavonian invaders, had not been very different from that of the imperial cities on the Adriatic, and that they had been compelled to develop a spirit of independence, which had caused a return of prosperity sufficient to awaken the envy of the Byzantine Greeks. The manner in which the Byzantine writers mention the dwellers in Greece, or *Helladikoi*, as they style them, in order to distinguish these Hellenes from the degenerate Romans, as they vainly term themselves, seems almost to imply envy as well as contempt.\* The term Hellenes was now either used to indicate the votaries of paganism, or was too closely associated with reminiscences of the glory of ancient Hellas, to be conferred on the rude Christian population of the Peloponnesus, by the educated in Constantinople.

In the midst of the darkness which conceals the political and social condition of the Greeks from our view during this period, a curious record of a later time informs us, that a portion of the Hellenic race, in the mountains of Laconia, still continued to preserve its ancient habits, and even clung to the pagan religion.† This circumstance supplies the strongest testimony of the neglected and secluded condition of the people, among whom the ideas of the enlightened portion of mankind had not succeeded in penetrating. These heathens were, of

\* THEOPHANIS *Ch.* 339. CEDRENIUS, i. 454. *Tafel de Thessalonica proleg.* lxx. 221. 513.

† CONSTANTINI PORPHYR. *De adm. imp.* c. 50. iii. 224. ed. BONN.

course, only uninstructed peasantry, who had preserved some of the superstitious usages of their ancestors, and who, probably, were as ignorant of the ideas and feelings of ancient paganism, as they were of Christian doctrines.

The barbarism of the Greeks, at this period, was the consequence of their poverty, which prevented their procuring the means of education, and restricted the uses of the knowledge which they might possess. In the circumstances to which they were reduced, it is not surprising that the Greeks lost all veneration both for literature and art, and that Greece, for some centuries, hardly furnishes a single name, in the long list of Greek writers, whose works have been considered worthy of mention. In this state of depopulation and ignorance, the relics of ancient art began to fall unnoticed to the ground: another age covered them with the ruins of the buildings which they had once adorned; and thus many remained concealed and preserved, until increasing population, and reviving prosperity, caused the reconstruction of new cities on ancient sites.

It was not in their native seats alone, that the Greeks declined in numbers and civilization at this period; even their distant colonies were rapidly sinking to ruin. During the reign of Justin, the city of Bosphorus, in Tauris, had been captured by the Turks, who then occupied a considerable portion of the Tauric Chersonesus.\* The city of Cherson alone continued to maintain its indepen-

\* *Excerpta e Menandri historia*, 404. ed. Bonn.

dence in the northern regions of the Black Sea, resembling, in its political relation to the empire, the cities of Dalmatia, and by its share of the northern trade, rivalling the power and influence of the barbarian princes in the neighbourhood.

## CHAPTER V.

## CONDITION OF THE GREEKS FROM THE DEATH OF HERACLIUS TO THE EXTINCTION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE IN THE EAST.

THE ROMAN EMPIRE GRADUALLY CHANGED INTO THE GREEK, OR BYZANTINE — CONQUEST OF THE SOUTHERN PROVINCES OF THE EMPIRE, OF WHICH THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION WAS NOT GREEK NOR ORTHODOX — CONSTANTINE THE SECOND FOLLOWED THE POLICY OF HERACLIUS — CONSTANTINE THE FOURTH YIELDED TO THE POPULAR ECCLESIASTICAL PARTY AMONG THE GREEKS — DEPOPULATION OF THE EMPIRE, AND DECREASE OF THE GREEKS UNDER JUSTINIAN THE SECOND — CONFUSED STATE OF THE ADMINISTRATION UNDER A SUCCESSION OF EMPERORS — A CHANGE TAKES PLACE IN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE EMPIRE UNDER LEO THE ISAURIAN — GENERAL VIEW OF THE CONDITION OF THE GREEKS AT THE EXTINCTION OF THE ROMAN POWER IN THE EAST.

## SECTION I.—THE ROMAN EMPIRE GRADUALLY CHANGED INTO THE GREEK, OR BYZANTINE.

THE precise date at which the eastern Roman empire ceased to exist has been variously fixed. Gibbon remarks, “that Tiberius, by the Arabs, and Maurice, by the Italians, are distinguished as the first of the Greek Cæsars, as the founders of a new dynasty and empire.”\* But if manners, language, and religion are to decide concerning the com-

\* GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, x. 154.

mencement of the Byzantine empire, the preceding pages have shewn, that its origin must be carried back to an earlier period; while, if the peculiarities of the form of government be taken as the ground of decision, the Roman empire may be considered as indefinitely prolonged with the existence of the title of Roman emperor, which the sovereign of Constantinople continued to retain. As long, however, as the prejudices of the governing classes, both in church and state, kept them completely separated from the national feelings of every race of their subjects, and rendered the imperial administration, and the people of the empire, two distinct bodies, with different, and frequently adverse views and interests, some traces of Roman domination, as well as policy, continued to animate the government, and guide the councils, of the emperor and his officers. The period, therefore, at which the Roman empire of the East terminated, is decided by the events which confined the authority of the government to those provinces where the Greeks formed the majority of the population, or, at least, where the educated and higher classes were directly connected with the imperial administration, from the use of the Greek language, the predominance of the orthodox church, and the prevalence of Greek civilization. For, when the Saracen conquests had severed from the empire all those provinces which possessed a native population distinct from the Greeks, by language, literature, and religion, the central government of Constantinople was gradually compelled to fall back on the interests and passions of the remaining inhabitants, who were chiefly



Greeks; and though Roman principles of administration still exercised a powerful influence in separating the aristocracy, both in church and state, from the body of the people, still public opinion, among the educated classes, began to exert some influence on the administration, and that public opinion was in its character really Greek. Yet, as it was by no means identified with the native inhabitants of Hellas, but existed among the Greeks of Constantinople and Asia, it ought correctly to be termed Byzantine, and the empire is, consequently, justly called the Byzantine empire. As the relics of the Macedonian empire at last overpowered every trace of the Roman domination in the government of the eastern empire, the court of Constantinople became identified with the feelings and interests of that portion of the Greek nation, which, in Europe and Asia, owed its political authority to the Macedonian conquests; and on the numbers, wealth, and power of this class, the emperor and the orthodox church were, after the commencement of the eighth century, compelled to depend for the defence of the government and the Christian religion.

The difficulty of fixing the precise moment which marks the end of the Roman empire, arises from the circumstance of its having perished, rather from the internal evils nourished in its political organization, than from the attacks of its external enemies. Its dissolution was, consequently, so gradual, that the new state was created by the transformation of the old. The Goths, Huns, Avars, Persians, and Saracens, all failed as completely in overthrowing the Roman empire, as the Mohammedans did in

destroying the Christian religion. For even the final loss of Egypt, Syria, and Africa, only marks the end of the Roman empire, when the consequences of the change begin to produce visible effects on the internal government. The Roman empire seems, therefore, really to have terminated with Justinian the Second, the last sovereign of the family of Heraclius, (A. D. 711,) and Leo the Third, or the Isaurian, who gave the imperial administration an ecclesiastical form, must be ranked as the first of the Byzantine monarchs, though neither the emperor, the clergy, nor the people, perceived, at the time, the moral change in their position, which makes the establishment of this new era historically correct.

Under the sway of the Heraclian family, the extent of the empire was circumscribed nearly within the bounds which it continued to occupy during many subsequent centuries. As this diminution of territory was chiefly caused by the separation of provinces, inhabited by people of different races, manners, and opinions, and placed, by a concurrence of circumstances, in opposition to the central government, it is not improbable that the empire was actually strengthened by the loss. The connection between the Constantinopolitan court and the Greek nation became closer; and though this connection, in so far as it affected the people, was chiefly based on religious, and not on political feelings, and operated with greater force on the inhabitants of the cities than on the whole body of the population, still its effect was extremely beneficial to the imperial government.

While the Roman and Persian empires had, by their ruinous wars, rapidly declined in wealth, power, and population, two new peoples had grown up to the possession of a greatly increased importance, and taken their place as arbiters of the fate of mankind. The Turks in the north of Asia, and the Arabs in the south, were now the most numerous, and the most powerful nations, in immediate contact with the civilized portion of mankind. The Turkish power of this time, however, never came into direct military relations with the Roman empire, nor did the conquests of this race immediately affect the political and social condition of the Greeks, until some centuries later. With the Arabs, or Saracens, the case was very different. As they were placed on the confines of Syria, Egypt, and Persia, the disturbances caused by the wars of Heraclius and Chosroes, threw a considerable portion of the rich trade with Ethiopia, Southern Africa, and India, into their hands. The long hostilities between the two empires gave a constant occupation to the warlike population of Arabia, and directed the attention of the Arabs to views of extended national policy, at the very time that the natural advantages of their unrivalled cavalry were augmented by the habits of order and discipline, which they could never have acquired in their native deserts. The Saracens in the service of the empire, are spoken of with praise by Heraclius, in his last campaign, when they accompanied him into the heart of Persia.\* The profits derived from their

\* *Chronicon Paschale*, 318.

increased commercial and military adventures, had doubtless given the Arabs a tendency to increase their population. Their intimate connection with the Roman and Persian armies had revealed to them the weakness of the two empires; yet the extraordinary power and conquests of the Arabs must be attributed, rather to the moral strength which the nation acquired by the influence of their prophet Mohammed, than to the extent of their improvement in military or political knowledge. The difference of a declining and an advancing population — of a people which expands all its productions and revenues in the cost of living and taxation, like the inhabitants of the Persian and Roman empires at this period — and of a people which, even from small profits and scanty resources, possesses a superfluity to spare for hospitality, liberal charity, public improvements, or military enterprizes, like the Arabs,—must never be lost sight of in weighing the relative strength of nations, apparently the most widely removed in wealth, population, and in the extent of their military establishments.

SECTION II.—CONQUEST OF THE SOUTHERN PROVINCES  
OF THE EMPIRE, OF WHICH THE MAJORITY OF THE  
POPULATION WAS NOT GREEK NOR ORTHODOX.

STRANGE as were the vicissitudes in the fortunes of the Persian and Roman empires during the reigns of Chosroes and Heraclius, every event in their records sinks into comparative insignificance, from the mighty influence which their contemporary,

Mohammed, the prophet of Arabia, soon began to exercise on the political, moral, and religious condition of the countries, whose possession these sovereigns had so eagerly disputed. Historians are apt to be enticed from their immediate subject, in order to contemplate the personal history of a man who obtained so marvellous a dominion over the minds and actions of his followers; and whose talents laid the foundations of a political and religious system, which has ever since continued to govern millions of mankind, of various races, and dissimilar manners. The success of Mohammed as a lawgiver, among the most ancient nations of Asia, and the stability of his institutions during a long series of generations, and in every condition of social polity, prove that this extraordinary man was formed by a rare combination of the qualities both of a Lycurgus and an Alexander. But still, in order to appreciate with perfect justness the influence of Mohammed on his own times, it is safer to examine the history of his contemporaries with reference to his conduct, than to fix our attention exclusively on his actions and opinions, and to trace from them the exploits of his followers, and attribute to them the rapid propagation of his religion. Even though it be admitted that Mohammed laid the foundations of his laws in the strongest principles of human nature, and prepared the fabric of his empire with the profoundest wisdom, still there can be no doubt, that the intelligence of no man could, during his lifetime, have foreseen, and no human combinations could have ensured, the extraordinary success of his followers. The laws which govern the moral world

ensure permanent success, even to the greatest minds, only as long as they form types of the mental feelings of their fellow-creatures. The circumstances of Mohammed's age were, indeed, favourable to his career; they formed the mind of this wonderful man, who has left their impress, as well as that of his own character, on succeeding generations. He was born at a period of visible intellectual decline amongst the aristocratic and governing classes throughout the civilized world. Aspirations after something better than the then social condition of the bulk of mankind, had rendered the inhabitants of almost every country dissatisfied with the existing order of things. A better religion than the paganism of the Arabs was felt to be necessary in Arabia; and, at the same time, even the people of Persia, Syria, and Egypt, required something more satisfactory to their religious feelings than the disputed doctrines which the Magi, Jews, and Christians, inculcated as the most important features of their respective religions, merely because they presented the points of greatest dissimilarity. The great success of Mani in propagating a new religion, (for Manicheism cannot properly be called a heresy,) is a strong testimony of this feeling. The fate, too, of the Manicheans, would probably have foreshadowed that of the Mohammedans, had the religion of Mohammed not presented to foreign nations a national cause, as well as a universal creed. Had Mohammed himself met with the fate of Mani, it is not probable that his religion could have been more successful than that of his predecessor. But he found a whole

nation in the full tide of rapid improvement, eagerly in search of knowledge and power. The excitement in the public mind of Arabia, which produced the mission of Mohammed, induced many other prophets to make their appearance during his lifetime. His superior talents, and his clearer perception of justice, and, we may say, truth, destroyed all their schemes.\*

The misfortunes of the times had directed public opinion in the East, to a belief that unity was the thing principally wanting to cure the existing evils, and secure the permanent happiness of mankind. This vague desire of unity is indeed no uncommon delusion of the human intellect. Mohammed seized the idea; his creed, "there is but one God," was a truth that ensured universal assent; the addition, "and Mohammed is the prophet of God," was a simple fact, which, if doubted, admitted of an appeal to the sword, an argument that even to the minds of the Christian world, was long considered as conclusive. The principle of unity was soon embodied in the frame of Arabic society; the unity of God, the national unity of the Arabs, and the unity of the religious, civil, judicial, and military administration, in one organ on earth, entitled the Mohammedans to assume, with justice, the name of Unitarians, a title in which they particularly gloried.† Such sentiments, joined to the declaration made, and long kept by the Saracens, that liberty of conscience was granted to all who would

\* OCKLEY'S *Hist. of the Saracens*, i. 13. ed. 1757. SALE'S *Koran*, prel. disc. i. 238. GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall*, ix. 355.

† OCKLEY'S *Hist. of the Saracens*, i. 197.

put themselves under the protection of Islam, were enough to secure the good will of that numerous body of the population of both the Persian and the Roman empires, which was opposed to the state religion, and which was continually exposed to persecution by these two bigoted governments. In Persia, Chosroes persecuted the orthodox Christians with as much cruelty as Heraclius tormented Jews and heretics within the bounds of the empire.\* The ability with which Mohammed put forward his creed, removed it entirely from the schools\* of theology, and secured among the people a secret feeling in favour of its justice, particularly when its votaries appeared as offering a refuge to the oppressed, and a protection against religious persecution.

As this work only proposes to notice the influence of Mohammedanism on the fortunes and condition of the Greek nation, it is not necessary to narrate in detail the progress of the Arab conquests in the Roman empire. The first hostilities between the followers of Mohammed and the Roman troops, occurred while Heraclius was at Jerusalem, engaged in celebrating the restoration of the holy cross, bearing it on his own shoulders up Mount Calvary, and persecuting the Jews by driving them out of their native city.† In his desire to obtain the favour of Heaven by purifying the Holy City, he overlooked the danger which his authority might

\* THEOPHANIS *Chron.* 252. ELMACIN, *Hist. Sarac.* p. 12. 14.

† The holy cross was replaced in the Church of the Resurrection on the 14th September, 629. In the month of Djoumadi I. in the eighth year of the Hegira, (September, 629,) war broke out between the Christian subjects of the empire, and the Saracens, followers of Mohammed.



incur from the hatred and despair of his persecuted subjects. The military operations of the Arabs excited little alarm in the minds of the emperor and his officers in Syria; the Roman forces had always been accustomed to repel the incursions of the Saracens with ease; the irregular cavalry of the desert, though often successful in plundering incursions, had hitherto proved ineffective against the regularly disciplined and completely armed troops of the empire. But a new spirit was now infused into the Arabian armies; and the implicit obedience which the troops of the Prophet paid to his commands, rendered their discipline as superior to that of the imperial forces, as their tactics and their arms were inferior.

Mohammed did not live to profit by the experience which his followers gained in their first struggle with the Romans; but as soon as Aboubekr had succeeded him in the government of Arabia, the Saracens undertook the invasion of Syria. In 633, an army of Arabs entered the province, and their progress was rapid, although Heraclius himself was in the neighbourhood, for he generally resided at Emesa, or Antioch, in order to devote his constant attention to restoring Syria to a state of order and obedience. The imperial troops made considerable efforts to support the military renown of the Roman armies, but were almost universally unsuccessful. The emperor did not neglect his duty; he assembled all the troops that he could collect, and intrusted the command of the army to his brother Theodore, who had distinguished himself in the Persian wars, by gaining an important victory

in very critical circumstances.\* Vahan, who commanded after Theodore, had also distinguished himself in the last glorious campaign in Persia.† Unfortunately, the health of Heraclius prevented his taking the field in person.‡ The absence of all moral checks in the Roman administration, and the total want of patriotism in the officers and troops at this period, rendered the personal influence of the emperor necessary, even at the head of his armies, in order to preserve due subordination, and enforce union among the leading men in the empire, as each individual was always more occupied in intriguing to get the advantage over his colleagues, than in striving to advance the service of the state. The ready obedience and devoted patriotism of the Saracens formed a sad contrast to the insubordination and treachery of the Romans, and would fully explain the success of the Mohammedan arms, without the assistance of any very extraordinary impulse of religious zeal, with which, however, there can be no doubt the Arabs were deeply imbued. The facility of the conquest of Syria by the Arabs, is by no means so wonderful as the ease with which they maintained their conquest, and the tranquillity of the population under their government.

In the first campaign, Bostra, a rich frontier town, was taken by the treachery of its commandant; in the second, the emperor's brother, Theodore, was defeated; and in a subsequent battle at Adjnadin,

\* THEOPHANIS *Chron.* 263.

† *Ibid.* 265; either in the year 634 or 636.

‡ NICEPHORUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, p. 17. OCKLEY, *Hist. Sarac.* i. 271.

the Roman general Vartan shared the same fate. A rebellion of Vartan's army, and another defeat, terminated this general's career;\* and before the conclusion of the campaign, the Arabs captured Damascus, in consequence of a capitulation with the inhabitants, which left the Christians in possession of some municipal rights, particularly of the great church, and of their local mint. The misfortunes of this campaign are said to have induced Heraclius to retreat to Constantinople. His son, Heraclius Constantine, who had received the imperial title, having been proclaimed Augustus in the year of his birth, continued to assist in the defence of the province, and to aid the military operations by his presence.† The third campaign is remarkable, as it illustrates the feelings of the Syrian population. The Arabs plundered a great fair at the monastery of Abilkodos, about thirty miles from Damascus; and the Syrian towns, alarmed for their wealth, and indifferent to the cause of their rulers, began to negotiate the purchase of separate truces with the Arabs. Indeed, wherever the imperial garrison was not sufficient to overawe the inhabitants, the native Syrians sought to make any arrangement with the Arabs which would ensure their towns from plunder, feeling satisfied that the Arab authorities could not use

\* Ockley, (i. 70,) names this general Werdan, and says he was slain at the battle of Adjuadin. Theophanes (*Chron.* p. 280,) calls him Vahan, (*Βαδύς*) and mentions the rebellion of his army. Eutychius, (ii. 276,) says, he retired from the field of battle, and became a monk at Mount Sinai.

† NICEPHORUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, p. 7. THEOPHANIS *Chron.* 251. Ockley's Arabian authorities confounded the young Heraclius with his father. See p. 271, where the father is spoken of when he could not be in Syria, and the son is mentioned at p. 282.

their power with greater rapacity and cruelty than the imperial officers. Emesa, (Hems,) Chalcis, (Kinesrim,) Arethusa, (Restan,) Epiphanea, (Hama,) Larissa, (Schizar,) and Heliopolis, (Baalbec,) all entered into treaties, which led to their becoming tributary to the Saracens. No general arrangements, either for defence or submission, were adopted by the Christians, whose ideas of political union had been utterly extinguished by the Roman power, and who were now satisfied if they could preserve their lives and properties, without seeking any guarantee for the future. The Romans soon assembled another powerful army, which was commanded by an Armenian general named Vahan, who was totally defeated, and taken prisoner in a battle fought near the River Yermouk.\* In the following year, A. D. 637, the Arabs advanced to Jerusalem, and the surrender of the Holy City was marked by arrangements between the Patriarch Sophronius, and the Caliph Omar, who repaired in person to Palestine, to take possession of so distinguished a conquest. The conditions of the capitulation indicate that the Christian patriarch looked rather to the protection of his own bishoprick, than to his duty to his country and his sovereign. The facility with which the Greek patriarch of Jerusalem, Sophronius, at this time, and the

\* Theophanes (*Chron.* p. 280) speaks of Vahan defeated at Yermouk, as the same person who commanded in the second campaign, and whom the Arabian historian distinguishes. This Vahan is called Mahan by Ockley, i. 192. Ockley's conjecture that Manuel was meant, has been copied in the *Universal History*, and by Le Beau. Both Vartan and Vahan are Armenian names. Manuel, who subsequently commanded in Egypt, was also an Armenian. LE BEAU, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, xi. notes de Saint Martin,

patriarch of Constantinople, Gennedius, at the time of the conquest of the Byzantine empire by Mohammed the Second, (A. D. 1453,) became the ministers of their Mohammedan conquerors, shews the slight hold which national feelings retained over the minds of the orthodox Greek clergy.\* It appears strange that Sophronius, who was the head of a Greek and Melchite congregation, living in the midst of a numerous and hostile Jacobite population, should have so readily consented to abandon his connection with the Greek empire and the orthodox church, when both religion and policy seemed so strongly to demand greater firmness; and on this very account, his conduct must be admitted to afford evidence of the humanity and good faith with which the early Mohammedans were believed to fulfil their promises.† The conquest of Aleppo soon followed that of Jerusalem. In 638, the conquest of Syria was completed by the defeat of Constantine, and the capture of Antioch, Cesarea, and most of the maritime cities — Constantine having abandoned the struggle, and retired to join his father in Constantinople.

The Arab conquest not only put an end to the political power of the Romans, which had lasted seven hundred years, but it also soon rooted out every

\* The Greek patriarchs of this age did little honour to their religion. Pyrrhus, patriarch of Constantinople, when banished after the death of Heraclius, is accused of renouncing his Monothelite opinions in orthodox Africa, and of making a public abjuration of them at Rome before the Pope Theodore. Yet when he visited Ravenna, he as publicly returned to his Monothelite belief.

† The violence with which Sophronius had opposed the opinions of the Monothelites, may have induced him to confound treason with orthodoxy. *Acta Sanctorum*, tom. ii. 63.

trace of the Greek civilization introduced by the conquests of Alexander the Great, and which had flourished in the country for upwards of nine centuries.\* A considerable number of native Syrians however, endeavoured to preserve their independence, and retreated into the fastnesses of Mount Libanon, where they continued to defend themselves. Under the name of Mardaïtes, they soon became formidable to the Mohammedans, and for some time checked the power of the caliphs in Syria, and by the diversions which they made whenever the arms of the Arabs were employed in Asia Minor, they contributed to arrest their progress.† The year after Syria was subdued, Mesopotamia was invaded, and proved an easy conquest; as its governors, and the inhabitants of its cities, displayed the same facilities shewn by the Syrians in entering into treaties with the Mohammedans.‡

As soon as the Arabs had completed the conquest of Syria, they invaded Egypt. The national and religious hostility which prevailed between the native population and the Greek colonists, ensured the Mohammedans a welcome from the Egyptians; but at the same time, this very circumstance excited the Greeks to make the most determined resistance. The Patriarch Cyrus had adopted the Monothelite opinions of his sovereign, and this rendered his

\* Pompey expelled Antiochus B. C. 65. Alexander the Great conquered Syria B. C. 331.

† The Mardaïtes are supposed by some to be the ancestors of the Maronites. THEOPHANIS *Chron.* 295. 300. ASSEMAN. *Biblioth. Orient. Vat.* tom. i. 496.

‡ THEOPHANIS *Chron.* 202. The governors of Osrhoene and Edessa, both proved traitors.

position uneasy amidst the orthodox Greeks of Alexandria. Anxious to avert any disturbance in the province, he conceived the idea of purchasing peace for Egypt from the Saracens, by paying them an annual tribute, and he entered into negotiations for this purpose, in which Mokaukas, who remained at the head of the fiscal department, joined him. The Emperor Heraclius, informed of this intrigue, sent an Armenian governor, Manuel, with a body of troops, to defend the province, and ordered the negotiations to be broken off. The fortune of the Arabs again prevailed, and the Roman army was defeated. Amron, the Saracen general, laid siege to Misr, or Babylon, the chief native city of Egypt, and the seat of the provincial administration. The treachery or patriotism of Mokaukas, for his position warrants either supposition, induced him to join the Arabs, and assist them in capturing the town.\* A capitulation was concluded, by which the native Egyptians retained possession of all their property, and enjoyed the free exercise of their religion as Jacobites, on paying a tribute of two pieces of gold for every male inhabitant. If the accounts of historians can be relied on, it would seem that the population of Egypt had suffered less from the vicious administration of the Roman empire, and from the Persian invasion, than any other part of their dominions; for about the time of its conquest by the Romans it contained seven millions and a half, exclusive of Alexandria, and it still

\* Ockley calls Mokaukas the prefect of Heraclius, of the sect of the Jacobites, and a mortal enemy of the Greeks. EUTYCHIUS, ii. 302, is his authority.

nourished almost as great a number.\* This fact is by no means surprising, for the most active cause of the depopulation of the Roman empire arose from the neglect of all those accessories of civilization, which facilitate the distribution and circulation as well as the production of the necessaries of life.† From neglect of this kind, Egypt had suffered little, as the natural advantages of the soil and the physical conformation of the country, intersected by one mighty river, had compensated for the supineness of its rulers. The Nile was the great road of the province, and nature kept it in sufficient repair during the greater part of its course. When its waters were separated over the Delta, they became a valuable property to corporations and individuals, whose rights the Roman law respected, and whose interests and wealth were sufficient to keep in repair the canals of irrigation; so that the vested capital of Egypt suffered little diminution, while war and oppression annihilated the accumulations of ages over the rest of the world. The immense wealth and importance of Alexandria, the only port which Egypt possessed for communicating with the empire, still made it one of the first cities in the universe for riches and population, though its strength had received a severe blow by the Persian conquest.‡

\* JOSEPHUS, B. J. ii. 16. vol. v. 206. Whiston's translation. Eutychius (ii. 311) says, that those registered for the tribute amounted to 6,000,000. He seems to confound this with the whole number of the native population.

† Strabo says the revenue of Egypt under Ptolemy Auletes was about two and a half millions sterling, and double under the Romans. In 1566, it yielded the Turks only L.150,000.—DR VINCENT, ii. 69.

‡ The Emperor Hadrian was struck by the commercial activity of Alexandria. "Civitas in qua nemo vivat otiosus." *Hist. Aug. Script.* 245.



The great wealth of Egypt, during this period, had been due, in a considerable degree, to the existence of the canal which connected the waters of the Nile with the Red Sea, which, by giving an additional vent to the agricultural produce of the province, materially contributed to maintain its immense population.\* This canal, in its most improved state, commencing at Babylon, and ending at Arsinoë, (Suez,) was navigable for nearly six months every year. It was used for large and bulky commodities, for which land carriage would have proved either impracticable, or too expensive. By means of it, Trajan transported, from the quarries to the sea, the columns and vases of granite and porphyry, with which he adorned Rome.† This canal may have been neglected during the troubles in the reigns of Phocas and Heraclius, while the Persians occupied the country; but it was in such a state of preservation, as to require but slight repairs from the earlier caliphs.‡ The carelessness of the Arab government, however, soon allowed it to fall into decay, and it was filled up by Al Manzor, A. D. 762—767.§

As soon as the Arabs had settled the affairs of the native population, they laid siege to Alexandria. This city made a vigorous defence, and Heraclius

\* Herodotus, Diodorus, and Strabo, saw this canal in operation. HEROD. ii. 158. DIOD. i. 32. 83. STRABO, l. 17. See also PLINII, *Hist. Nat.* vi. 29. PLUTARCH'S *Life of Antony*, s. 82. LUCIAN, *Pseudomant*, s. 44.

† STRABO, xvii. 788. 804. PTALOM. *Geog.* iv. 5. p. 108. It was called, after Trajan's repairs, *Ἰσθμὸς Σεβαστῆς*.

‡ EUSEBIUS, *Hist. Ecc.* viii. c. 8. PAUL. SILENT. *Disc. Sanctæ Sophiæ*. i. v. 379, 625.

§ LE BEAU, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, xi. 300. *Notes de S. M. Notices des Manuscrits Arabes*, par LANGLES, tom. vi. 334.

exerted himself to succour it ; but though it held out for fourteen months, it was at last taken by the Arabs, who placed in it a feeble garrison. The Roman troops, watching an opportunity for renewing the war, again recovered the city, and massacred the Mohammedans, but were soon compelled to retire to their ships, and make their escape. This conquest is said to have cost the Arabs twenty-three thousand men, and they used their success like rude barbarians, destroying the libraries and works of art.\* In less than five years, (A. D. 646,) a Roman army, sent by the Emperor Constans, under the command of Manuel, again recovered possession of Alexandria, by the assistance of the Greek inhabitants, who had remained in the place when it was taken by the Arabs ; but the Mohammedans soon appeared before the city, and, with the assistance of the Egyptians, compelled the imperial troops to abandon their conquest.† The walls of Alexandria were thrown down, the Greek population driven out, and the commercial importance of the city destroyed. Thus perished one of the most remarkable colonies of the Greek nation, and one of the most renowned seats of that Greek civilization of which Alexander the Great had laid the foundations in the East, after having flourished, in the highest degree of prosperity, for nearly a thousand years.‡

\* Gibbon, in his account of the destruction of the great Alexandrian library, deprecates the injury which literature sustained. ix. 438, note.

† EUTYCHIUS, 2. 339. OCKLEY, i. 325.

‡ Alexandria was founded B. C. 332. After the conquest of Egypt by the Saracens, the Egyptian or Coptic language began to give way to the Arabic. This followed, because the numbers of the Copts were gradually reduced by the oppressive government of their new masters, until they formed a minority of the population.

The conquest of Cyrenaïca followed the subjugation of Egypt as an immediate consequence. The Greeks are said to have planted their first colonies in this country six hundred and thirty-one years before the Christian era,\* and twelve centuries of uninterrupted possession appear to have constituted them the perpetual tenants of the soil; but the Arabs were very different masters from the Romans, and under their domination, the Greek race soon became extinct in Africa. It is not necessary here to follow the Saracens in their farther conquests westward. The people with whom they had to contend were Latin, and not Greek, in the western provinces; they were attached to the Roman government, though often disgusted by the tyranny of the emperors; and, consequently, they defended themselves with far more courage and obstinacy than the Syrians and Egyptians. The war was marked by considerable vicissitudes, and it was not till the year 698, that Carthage fell permanently into the hands of the Saracens, who, according to their usual barbarous policy, destroyed the walls, and ruined the public buildings, in order to destroy every political trace of Roman government in Africa. The Saracens were singularly successful in all their projects of destruction; in a short time, both Latin and Greek civilization was exterminated on the southern shores of the Mediterranean.

It may be observed, that the success of the Mohammedan religion, under the earlier caliphs, did not keep pace with the progress of the Arab

\* CLINTON'S *Fasti Hellenici*, i. 204.

arms. Of all the native population of the countries subdued, the Arabs of Syria alone appear to have immediately adopted the new religion of their co-national race; but the great mass of the Christians in Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Cyrenaïca, and Africa, clung firmly to their faith; and the decline of Christianity, in all these countries, is to be attributed rather to the extermination than to the conversion of the Christian inhabitants. The decrease in the number of the Christians, was invariably attended by a decrease in the numbers of the inhabitants, and arose evidently from the oppressive treatment which they suffered under the Mohammedan rulers of these countries,—a system of tyranny which was, at last, carried so far, as to reduce whole provinces to unpeopled deserts, ready to receive an Arab population, almost in a savage state, as the successors of the exterminated Christians. It was only, indeed, when Mohammedanism presented its system of unity, in opposition to the evident falsity of idolatry, or to the unintelligible discussions of a fanciful theology, that the human mind was easily led away by its religious doctrines, which addressed the passions of mankind rather too palpably to be secure of commanding their reason. The earliest Mohammedan conversions of foreign races, were made among the subjects of Persia, who mingled native or provincial superstitions with the Magian faith; and among the Christians of Nubia, and the interior of Africa, whose religion may have departed very far from the pure doctrines of Christianity. The success of the Mohammedans was generally confined to barbarous and ignorant con-

verts; and the more civilized people retained their faith as long as they could secure their national existence. This fact deserves to be carefully contrasted with the progress of Christianity, which usually indicated an immediate advance in the scale of civilization. Yet the peculiar causes which enabled the Christians of the seventh and eighth centuries, in the ignorant and debased mental condition into which they had fallen, to resist steadily the attacks of Mohammedanism, and to prefer extinction to apostacy, deserve a more accurate investigation than they have yet met with from historians.

The construction of the political government of the Saracen empire was far more imperfect than the creed of the Mohammedans, and shews that Mohammed had neither contemplated extensive foreign conquests, nor devoted the energies of his powerful mind to the consideration of the questions of administration which would arise out of the difficult task of ruling a numerous and wealthy population, possessed of property, but deprived of civil rights. No attempt was made to arrange any systematic form of political government, and the whole power of the state was vested in the hands of the chief priest of the religion, who was only answerable for the due exercise of this extraordinary power, to God, his own conscience, and his subjects' patience. The moment, therefore, that the responsibility created by national feelings, military companionship, and exalted enthusiasm, ceased to operate on the minds of the caliphs, the administration became far more oppressive than

that of the Roman empire. No local magistrates elected by the people, and no parish priests, connected by their feelings and interests both with their superiors and inferiors, bound society together by common ties; and no system of legal administration, independent of the military and financial authorities, preserved the property of the people from the rapacity of the government. Socially and politically, the Saracen empire was little better than the Gothic, Hunnish, and Avar monarchies; and that it proved more durable, with almost equal oppression, is to be attributed to the powerful enthusiasm of Mohammed's religion, which tempered for some time its avarice and tyranny.

Even the military successes of the Arabs are to be ascribed, in some measure, to accidental causes, over which they themselves exercised no control. Their enthusiasm was more powerful than the courage of the Roman troops; and their strict obedience to their leaders compensated, in a great degree, for their inferiority in arms and tactics.\* But in a long war, it would have been seen, as it really proved, that the military qualities of the Roman armies were more lasting than those of the Arabs. The important and rapid conquests of the Arabs in the empire were assisted by the religious dissensions and national antipathies, which placed the great bulk of the people of Syria, Mesopotamia, and Egypt, in hostility to the Roman arms, and neutralized many of the advantages which, from

\* OCKLEY's *Hist. of the Saracens*, i. 85. The Greeks (Roman troops) were completely armed; the Arabs were almost without defensive armour until they had obtained the arms of the Greeks by conquest.

their superior military skill, they might have derived amidst a favourable population. The Roman government had to encounter the excited energies of the Arabs, at a moment, too, when its resources were exhausted, and its strength weakened by a long war with Persia, which, with the loss of many provinces, had, for several years, totally destroyed the central executive administration, and enabled numerous chiefs to acquire an almost independent authority. These chiefs were generally destitute of every feeling of patriotism; their conduct was entirely directed by ambition and interest, and they sought only to secure themselves in the possession of the districts which they governed. The example of Mokaukas in Egypt, and of Youkinna at Aleppo, are remarkable instances of the power and treasonable disposition of many of these imperial officers. But almost every governor in Syria displayed equal faithlessness.\* Yet, in spite of the treason of some officers, and the submission of others, the defence of Syria does not appear to have been, on the whole, disgraceful to the Roman army; and the Saracens purchased their conquest by severe fighting, and at the cost of much blood. An anecdote mentioned in the History of the Saracens,† shews that the importance of order and discipline was not overlooked by Khaled, the Sword of God, as he was styled by his admiring countrymen; and that his great success was owing to military skill, as well as

\* Mansour, the governor of Damascus. EUTYCHIUS, ii. 281. Bostra, Emesa, Kinnisrin, and Aleppo. OCKLEY, i. 156 — 162. The citizens of Baalbec. OCKLEY, i. 179.

† OCKLEY, i. 70.

religious enthusiasm and fiery valour. "Mead," says the historian, "encouraged the Saracens with the hopes of Paradise, and the enjoyment of everlasting life, if they fought for the cause of God and religion. 'Softly,' said Khaled, 'let me get them into good order before you set them upon fighting.'"<sup>\*</sup> Under all the disadvantages mentioned, it is not surprising that the hostile feelings of a numerous and wealthy portion of the Syrian community, engaged in trade, and willing to purchase peace at any reasonable sacrifice, should have turned the scale against the Romans. The struggle became doubtful, from the moment that the people of Emesa, and the neighbouring cities, could venture to conclude truces with the Saracens, merely for the purpose of securing their own property, and without any reference to the general interests of the province, or the military plans of defence of the Roman government. Yet one of the chiefs, who held a portion of the coast of Phœnicia, succeeded in maintaining his independence against the whole power of the Saracens, and formed, in the mountains of Libanon, a small Christian principality, of which the town of Byblos (Djebail) was the capital. Round this nucleus, the Mardaïtes, or native Syrians, appear to have rallied in considerable force.

The great influence exercised by the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Alexandria, over the administration in their provinces, tended also to weaken and distract the measures adopted for the defence of these

<sup>\*</sup> A similar anecdote is told of Cromwell, who once addressed his troops, "Put your trust in the Lord, and keep your powder dry."



countries. Their willingness to treat and negotiate with the Arabs, who were resolved only to be satisfied with conquest, placed the Roman armies and government in a disadvantageous position. Where the chances of war are nearly balanced, the good will of the people will eventually decide the contest in favour of the party that they espouse. Now, there is strong reason to believe, that the great majority of the subjects of the Roman empire, in the provinces which were conquered during the reign of Heraclius, were the well-wishers of the Arabs; and that they fancied they were sufficiently guaranteed against the oppression of their new masters, by the rigid observance of justice which characterized all their earlier acts. A temporary advantage of diminished tribute, or the escape from some oppressive act of administration, induced them to compromise their religious position and their national independence. The fault is too natural a one to be severely blamed; for of religious liberty the age had no just conception, and the Syrians and Egyptians had been slaves for far too many centuries, to be impressed with any idea of the sacrifices which a nation ought to make, in order to secure its independence. The moral tone adopted by the Caliph Aboubekr, in his instructions to the Syrian army, was also so unlike the principles of the Roman government, that it must have commanded profound attention from a subject people. "Be just," said the proclamation of Aboubekr, "the unjust never prosper; be valiant, die rather than yield; be merciful, slay neither old men, children, nor women. Destroy neither fruit-trees, grain, nor cattle; keep

your word, even to your enemies ; molest not those men who live retired from the world, but compel the rest of mankind to become Mussulmans, or to pay us tribute, — if they refuse these terms, slay them." Such a proclamation, announced to the Jews and heterodox Christians, sentiments of justice, and principles of toleration, which neither the Roman emperors nor the orthodox bishops had ever adopted as the rule of their conduct. Add to this remarkable document, the effect produced by the wonderful spectacle of the Caliph Omar riding into Jerusalem, on the camel which carried all the baggage and provisions which he required for his journey from Mecca, and the deep impression which such things must have produced on the minds of an oppressed people, could only tend to imbitter their hatred towards their ancient masters. Had, therefore, the Saracens been able to unite a system of judicial legislation and administration, and of elective local and municipal governments, for their conquered subjects, with the vigour of their own central power, and the religious monarchy of their own national government, it is difficult to conceive that any limits could ultimately have been opposed to their authority, by the then existing states into which the world was divided.\*

But the political policy of the Saracens was of

\* The fanaticism which is usually made the reproach of the early Mohammedans, is correct only when applied to later times. Even the fire-worshippers of Persia, who were idolaters in the eyes of the Saracens, and did not worship the true God, were, by their principles of toleration, allowed the exercise of their religion on paying tribute, a fact proved by several passages in the Arabian historians. *Ueber Arabisch Byzantinische Münzen*, von. CURT BOZE, p. 16. von. HANMER, p. 80.

itself utterly barbarous, and it only caught a passing gleam of justice from the religious feeling of their prophet's doctrines. A remarkable feature of the policy by which they maintained their power over the provinces which they conquered, ought not to be overlooked, as it illustrates both the inherent barbarism of their ideas, and the low state of their social civilization. They generally destroyed the walls of the cities which they subdued; and whenever commercial cities of any eminence offered peculiar facilities for foreign invasion, or possessed a native population active and bold enough to threaten danger from rebellion, such cities were either destroyed or weakened, and the administration was transferred from the old cities to new capitals, founded where a convenient military station for overawing the country could be safely established. Thus Alexandria, Babylon or Misr, Carthage, Ctesiphon, and Babylon, were destroyed, and Fostat, Kairowan, Cufa, Bussora, and Bagdat, rose to supplant them.

SECTION III.—CONSTANS THE SECOND FOLLOWED THE  
POLICY OF HERACLIUS.

AFTER the death of Heraclius, the short reigns of his sons, Constantine the Third, and Heracleonas, were disturbed by court intrigues, and the disorders which naturally result from the want of a settled law of succession. In such conjunctures, the people and the courtiers learn alike to traffic in sedition. Before the termination of the year in

which Heraclius died, (A. D. 641,) his grandson, Constans the Second, mounted the imperial throne at the age of eleven, in consequence of the death of his father Constantine, and the dethronement of his uncle Heracleonas. An oration made by the young prince to the senate after his accession, in which he invoked the aid of that body, and spoke of their power in terms of reverence, warrants the conclusion, that the aristocracy had again recovered all their influence over the imperial administration; and that, though the emperor's authority was still held to be absolute by the constitution of the empire, it was really controlled by the influence of the aristocracy not holding ministerial offices.\*

Constans grew up to be a man of considerable abilities, and of an energetic character, but possessed of violent passions, and destitute of all the amiable feelings of humanity. The early part of his reign, during which the imperial ministers were controlled by the selfish aristocracy, was marked by the loss of several portions of the empire. The Lombards conquered all the coast of Italy from the maritime Alps to the frontiers of Tuscany; and the exarch of Ravenna was defeated with considerable loss near Modena; but still the Lombards were unable to make any serious impression on the exarchate. Armenia was compelled to pay tribute to the Saracens. Cyprus was rendered tributary to the caliph, though the amount of the tribute imposed was only seven thousand two hundred pieces of gold — half of what it had previously paid to the

\* THEOPHANIS *Chron.* 284.

emperor. It is certain that this sum must have formed but a small portion of the whole revenues paid by the island to the Roman government. If there be no error in the authors who report the amount, it must have constituted either some peculiar payment to the imperial treasury, or else the sum for which the customs were farmed. It contrasts strangely with the large payments made by single cities for a year's truce in Syria, and the immense wealth found by the Arabs in Syria, Egypt, Persia, and Africa.\* The commercial town of Aradus, in Syria, had hitherto resisted the Saracens, from the strength of its insular position. It was now taken and destroyed. In a subsequent expedition of the Saracens, Cos was taken by the treachery of its bishop, and the city plundered and laid waste. Rhodes was then attacked and captured. This last conquest is memorable for the destruction of the celebrated Colossus, which, though it fell about fifty-six years after its erection, had been always, even in its prostrate condition, regarded as one of the wonders of the world. The admiration of the Greeks and Romans had protected it from destruction for nine centuries. The Arabs, to whom works of art possessed no value, broke it in pieces, and sold the bronze, which is said to have loaded nine hundred and eighty camels.

\* The governor of Jushiya paid 4000 pieces of gold, and fifty pieces of silk, for a year's truce. OCKLEY, i. 150. Hems paid 10,000 pieces of gold, and 200 pieces of silk. P. 154. Baalbec, 2000 ounces of gold, 4000 of silver, and 2000 pieces of silk. P. 177. Kinnisrin and Alhadir, 5000 ounces of gold, as many of silver, and 2000 vests of silk. P. 233. The tribute of Egypt was two pieces of gold a head. EUTYCHIUS, ii. 308. The accounts of the wealth of Ctesiphon are almost incredible, and those of Sufetula in Byzacene completely so. LE BEAU, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, vol. xi. 313, 329.

As soon as Constans was old enough to assume the direction of public business, the two great objects of his policy were the establishment of the absolute power of the emperor over the orthodox church, and the recovery of the lost provinces of the empire. With the view of obtaining and securing a perfect control over the ecclesiastical affairs of his dominions, he published an edict, called the Type, in the year 648, when he was only eighteen years old.\* It was prepared by Paul, the patriarch of Constantinople, and was intended to terminate the disputes produced by the ecthesis of Heraclius. All parties were commanded by the type to observe a profound silence on the previous quarrels concerning the will and operation in Christ. Liberty of conscience was an idea almost unknown to any but the Mohammedans, so that Constans never thought of appealing to any such right; and no party in the Christian church was inclined to waive its orthodox authority of enforcing its own opinions on others. The Latin church, led by the bishop of Rome, was always ready to oppose the Greek clergy, who enjoyed the favour of the imperial court, and this jealousy engaged the pope in violent opposition to the type. But the bishop of Rome was not then so powerful as the popes became at a subsequent period, so that he durst not attempt directly to question the authority of the emperor in regulating such matters. Perhaps it appeared to him hardly prudent to rouse the passions of a young prince of eighteen, who might prove not very bigoted in his

\* The Type is contained in HARDWIN'S *Concilia*, tom. i. p. 834.

attachment to any party, as indeed the provisions of the type seemed to indicate. The Pope Theodore, therefore, directed the whole of his ecclesiastical fury against the patriarch of Constantinople, whom he excommunicated with circumstances of singular and impressive violence. He descended with his clergy into the dark tomb of Saint Peter in the Vatican, now under the centre of the dome in the vault of the great cathedral of Christendom, consecrated the sacred cup, and, having dipped his pen into the blood of Christ, he signed an act of excommunication, condemning a brother bishop to the pains of hell. To this indecent proceeding, Paul the Patriarch replied by persuading the emperor to persecute the clergy who adhered to the pope's opinion, in a more regular and legal manner, by depriving them of their temporalities, and condemning them to banishment. The pope was supported by nearly the whole body of the Latin clergy, and even by a considerable party in the East; yet, when Martin, the successor of Theodore, ventured to anathematize the ecthesis and the type, he was seized by order of Constans, conveyed to Constantinople, tried, and condemned on a charge of having supported the rebellion of the Exarch Olympius, and of having remitted money to the Saracens. The emperor, at the intercession of the Patriarch Paul, commuted his punishment to exile, and the pope died in banishment at Cherson in Tauris. Though Constans could not succeed in inculcating his doctrines on the clergy, he completely succeeded in enforcing public obedience to his decrees in the church, and the fullest acknowledgment of his

supreme power over the persons of the clergy. These disputes, however, between the heads of the ecclesiastical administration of the Greek and Latin churches, afforded an excellent pretext for widening the breach between them, which had its real origin in national feelings and clerical interests, and was only augmented by the difficult and not very intelligible distinctions of monothelitism. Constans himself, by his vigour and personal activity in this struggle, incurred the bitter hatred of a large portion of the clergy, and his conduct has been unquestionably the object of much misrepresentation and calumny.

The attention of Constans to ecclesiastical affairs induced him to visit Armenia, where his attempts to unite the people to his government by regulating the affairs of their church, were as unsuccessful as his religious interference elsewhere. Dissensions were increased; one of the imperial officers of high rank rebelled; and the Saracens availed themselves of this state of things to invade both Armenia and Cappadocia, and succeeded in rendering several districts tributary. The increasing power of Moawyah, the Arab general, induced him to form a project for the conquest of Constantinople, and he began to fit out a great naval expedition at Tripoli in Syria. A daring enterprise of two brothers, Christian inhabitants of the place, rendered the expedition abortive. These two Tripolitans and their partizans broke open the prisons in which the Roman captives were confined, and, placing themselves at the head of an armed band which they had hastily formed, seized the city, slew the governor, and burnt



the fleet. A second armament was at length prepared by the energy of Moawyah, and as it was reported to be directed against Constantinople, the Emperor Constans took upon himself the command of his own fleet. He met the Saracen expedition off Mount Phœnix in Lycia, and attacked it with great vigour. Twenty thousand Romans are said to have perished in the battle;\* and the emperor himself owed his safety to the valour of one of the Tripolitan brothers, whose gallant defence of the imperial galley enabled the emperor to escape before its valiant defender was slain, and the vessel fell into the hands of the Saracens. The emperor retired to Constantinople, but the hostile fleet had suffered too much to attempt any farther operations, and the expedition was abandoned for that year. The death of Othman, and the pretensions of Moawyah to the caliphate, (A. D. 655,) began to withdraw the attention of the Arabs from the empire. Constans then turned his forces against the Slavonians, in order to deliver the European provinces from their ravages. They were totally defeated, many were carried off as slaves, and the rest compelled to submit to the imperial authority. No certain grounds exist for determining whether this expedition was directed against the Slavonians, who had established themselves between the Danube and Mount Hæmus, or against those who had settled in Macedonia; yet, the circumstance of no town's being mentioned in the accounts of the campaign, seems to indicate that it is more probable that the people subdued were the

\* *ABOU'LFARADJ, Chron. Syr.* p. 111.

Slavonians beyond Mount Hæmus, who were subsequently conquered by the Bulgarians.\*

As the affairs of the European provinces, in the vicinity of the capital, were now tranquillized, Constans again prepared to engage the Arabs; and Moawyah, having need of all the forces he could command for his contest with Ali, the son-in-law of Mohammed, consented to make peace, in terms which contrast curiously with the perpetual defeats which Constans is always represented, by the orthodox historians of the empire, to have suffered. The Saracens engaged to confine their forces within Syria and Mesopotamia, and Moawyah consented to pay Constans, for the cessation of hostilities, the sum of a thousand pieces of silver, and to furnish him with a slave and a horse for every day during which the peace should continue. A. D. 659.

During the subsequent year, Constans condemned to death his brother Theodosius, whom he had compelled to enter the priesthood. The cause of this crime, or the pretext for it, is not mentioned. From this brother's hand, the emperor had often received the sacrament; and the fratricide is supposed to have rendered a residence at Constantinople insupportable to the conscience of the criminal, who was reported nightly to behold the spectre of his brother offering him the consecrated cup, filled with human blood, and exclaiming, "Drink, brother!" Certain it is, that two years after his brother's death, Constans quitted his capital, with the intention of never returning; and he was only prevented, by an insur-

\* THEOPHANIS *Ck.* pp. 288—299. ZINKEISEN, i. 733. *Tafel Thessalonica*, lxxxiii.

rection of the people, from carrying off the empress and his children. He meditated the reconquest of Italy from the Lombards, and proposed rendering Rome again the seat of empire. On his way to Italy, the emperor spent the winter at Athens; he was attended by a numerous suite, and a considerable body of troops; and the selection of Athens for the winter quarters of the expedition, affords strong evidence of the tranquil, flourishing, and populous condition of the city and country around. It is evident, that the Sclavonian colonies in Greece must, at this time, have owned the most perfect allegiance to the imperial power, or Constans would certainly have employed himself in reducing them to subjection. In the spring of the year 638, Constans landed with his forces at Tarentum, and having assembled an army, he attempted to take Beneventum, the chief seat of the Lombard power in the south of Italy. His troops were twice defeated, and all his projects of conquests were then abandoned.

The emperor himself repaired to Rome. His visit lasted only a fortnight. According to the writers who describe the event, he consecrated twelve days to religious ceremonies and processions, and the remaining two he devoted to plundering the wealth of the church. His personal acquaintance with the affairs of Italy, and the state of Rome, soon convinced him, that the eternal city was ill adapted for the capital of the empire, and he quitted it for Sicily, where he fixed on Syracuse for his future residence. Grimoald, the able monarch of the Lombards, and his son Romuald, the Duke

of Beneventum, continued the war in Italy with vigour. Brundisium and Tarentum were captured, and the Romans expelled from Calabria, so that Otranto and Gallipoli were the only towns on the eastern coast of which Constans retained possession.

When residing in Sicily, Constans directed his attention to the state of Africa. His measures are not detailed with precision, but were evidently distinguished by the usual energy and caprice which marked his whole conduct. He recovered possession of Carthage, and of several cities which the Arabs had rendered tributary; but he displeased the inhabitants of the province, by compelling them to pay to himself the same amount of tribute as they had agreed by treaty to pay to the Saracens; and as Constans could not expel the Saracen forces from the province, the amount of the public taxes of the Africans was thus doubled,—since both parties were able to levy the contributions which they demanded. Moawyah sent an army from Syria, and Constans one from Sicily, to decide who should become sole master of the country. A battle was fought near Tripoli, and though the army of Constans consisted of thirty thousand men, it was completely defeated. Yet the victorious army of the Saracens was unable to take the small town of Geloula, (Usula,) until the accidental fall of a portion of the ramparts laid it open to their assault; and this trifling conquest was followed by no farther success. In the East, the empire was equally exposed to danger, yet the enemies of Constans were eventually unsuccessful in their projects. In consequence of the rebellion of the Armenian troops, whose commander, Sapor,

assumed the title of emperor, the Saracens made a successful incursion into Asia Minor; the city of Amorium, in Phrygia, was captured, and the Saracens placed in it a garrison of five thousand men. The imperial general, however, appointed by Constans, soon drove out this powerful garrison, and recovered the place.

It appears, therefore, that in spite of all the defeats which Constans is reported to have suffered, the empire underwent no very sensible diminution of its territory during his reign, and he certainly left its military forces in a more efficient condition than he found them. He was assassinated, in a bath at Syracuse, by an officer of his household, in the year 668, at the age of thirty-eight, after a reign of twenty-seven years. The fact of his having been murdered by one of his own household, joined to the appearance of capricious violence that marked many of his public acts, warrants the supposition that his character was of the unamiable and unsteady nature, which rendered the accusation of fratricide, so readily believed by his cotemporaries, by no means impossible. It must, however, be admitted, that the occurrences of his reign afford irrefragable testimony, that his heretical opinions have induced orthodox historians to give an erroneous notion of many circumstances, since the undoubted results do not correspond with their descriptions of the passing events.

SECTION IV.—CONSTANTINE THE FOURTH YIELDED TO  
THE POPULAR ECCLESIASTICAL PARTY AMONG THE  
GREEKS.

CONSTANTINE the Fourth, called Pogonatus, or the Bearded, has been regarded by posterity with a high degree of favour. Yet his merit seems to have consisted in his superior orthodoxy, rather than in his superior talents as emperor. The concessions which he made to the see of Rome, and the moderation that he displayed in all ecclesiastical affairs, placed his conduct in strong contrast with the stern energy with which his father had enforced the subjection of the orthodox ecclesiastics to the civil power, and gained for him the praise of the priesthood, whose eulogies have exerted no inconsiderable influence on all historians. Constantine, however, was certainly an intelligent and just prince, who, though he did not possess the stubborn determination and great talents of his father, was destitute also of his violent passions and imprudent character.

As soon as Constantine was informed of the murder of his father, and that a rebel had assumed the purple in Sicily, he hastened thither in person to avenge his death, and extinguish the rebellion. To satisfy his vengeance, the Patrician Justinian, a man of high character, compromised in the rebellion, was treated with great severity, and his son Germanos with a degree of inhumanity, that would have been recorded by the clergy against

Constans, as an instance of the grossest barbarity.\* The return of the emperor to Constantinople was signalized by a singular sedition of the troops in Asia Minor. They marched towards the capital, and having encamped on the Asiatic shores of the Bosphorus, demanded that Constantine should admit his two brothers, on whom he had conferred the rank of Augustus, to an equal share in the public administration, in order that the Holy Trinity in heaven, which governs the spiritual world, might be represented by a human trinity, to govern the political empire of the Christians. The very proposal is a proof of the complete supremacy of the civil over the ecclesiastical authority, in the eyes of the people, and the strongest evidence that in the public opinion of the age, the emperor was regarded as the head of the church. Such reasoning as the rebels used could be rebutted by no arguments, and Constantine had energy enough to hang the leaders of the sedition, and sufficient moderation not to molest his brothers. But several years later, either from increased suspicions, or from some intrigues on their part, he deprived them of the rank of Augustus, and condemned them to have their noses cut off.† (A.D. 681.) The condemnation of his brother to death by Constans, figures in history as one of the blackest crimes of humanity, while the barbarity of

\* This Germanos, notwithstanding his mutilation by Constantine, became bishop of Cyzicus, and joined the Monothelites in the reign of Philippicus. He retracted, and was made patriarch of Constantinople by Anastasius the Second, (A. D. 715,) and figured as an active defender of images against Leo the Third, the Isaurian.

† THEOPHANIS *CÆRON*. pp. 293. 300.

the orthodox Constantine, is passed over as a lawful act. Both rest on the same authority, on the testimony of Theophanes, the earliest Greek chronicler, and both may really have been acts of justice necessary for the security of the throne, and the tranquillity of the empire. Constans was a man of a violent temper, and Constantine of a mild disposition; both may have been equally just, but both were, without doubt, unnecessarily severe. A brother's crimes could never merit a greater punishment from a brother, than seclusion in a monastery.

The great object of the imperial policy at this period, was to oppose the progress of the Mohammedans. Constans, indeed, had succeeded in arresting their conquests, but Constantine soon found that they would give the empire no rest, unless he could secure it by his victories. He had hardly quitted Sicily, in order to return to Constantinople, before an Arab expedition from Alexandria invaded the island, and stormed the city of Syracuse, where the Saracens having plundered all the treasures accumulated by Constans, immediately abandoned the place. In Africa the war was continued with various success, but the Christians were long left without any succours from Constantine, while Moawyah supplied the Saracens with strong reinforcements. In spite of the courage and enthusiasm of the Mohammedans, the native Christian population maintained their ground with firmness, and carried on the war with such vigour, that in the year 676, a native African leader, who commanded the united forces of the Romans and Berbers, captured the newly founded



city of Kairowan, which at a subsequent period became renowned as the capital of the Fatimite caliphs.\*

The ambition of the Caliph Moawyah, induced him to aspire at the conquest of the Roman empire ; and the military organization of the Arabian power, which enabled the caliph to direct the whole resources of his dominions to any single object of conquest, seemed to promise success to the enterprise. A powerful expedition was sent to besiege Constantinople. The time required for the preparation of such an armament did not enable the Saracens to arrive at the capital, without passing a winter on the coast of Asia Minor, and on their arrival in the spring of the year 673, they found that the emperor had made every preparation for defence. Their forces, however, were so numerous, that they were sufficient to invest Constantinople by sea and land. The troops occupied the whole of the land side of the triangle on which the city is constructed, while the fleet effectually blockaded the port. The Saracens failed in all their assaults, both by sea and land, and the Romans attributed their own success principally to the use of the celebrated Greek fire, which was invented shortly before this siege, and was first used on this occasion.† The military art had declined during the preceding centuries, as rapidly as every other branch of scientific culture ; and the resources of the mighty

\* Kairowan was founded by Akbah, in 670 ; taken by the Christians in 676 ; recovered by the Arabs under Zohair ; but retaken by the Christians, in 688 ; and finally conquered by Hassan, in 697.

† For an account of the Greek fire, see the Articles *Callinicus*, (vi. 551.) and *Marcus Grecus*, (xxvi. 623.) in the *Biographie Universelle*.

empire of the Arabs were so limited, from the ignorance and bad administration of its rulers, that the caliph, during the winter, was unable to maintain his forces before Constantinople. The Saracen army, in order to pass this season in the neighbourhood, that it might renew its attack on the capital the ensuing summer, occupied Cyzicus, whither it went into winter quarters at the end of autumn. This strange mode of besieging cities, unattempted since the times the Dorians had invaded Peloponnesus, was continued for seven years; but, in this warfare, the Saracens suffered far more severely than the Romans, and were at last compelled to abandon their enterprise.\* The land forces tried to effect their retreat through Asia Minor, but were entirely cut off in the attempt; and a tempest destroyed the greater part of the fleet, off the coast of Pamphylia. During the time that this great body of his forces was employed against Constantinople, Moawyah sent a division of his troops to invade Crete, which had been visited by a Saracen army in 651. The island was now compelled to pay tribute, but the inhabitants were treated with great mildness, as it was the policy of the caliph at this time, to conciliate the good opinion of the Christians, by his liberal government, in order to pave the way for future conquests. Moawyah carried his religious tolerance so far, as to rebuild

\* During the siege of Constantinople, Abou Ayoub, who had received Mohammed into his house, on his flight to Medina, died; and the celebrated mosque of Ayoub, in which the sultan, on his accession, receives the investiture of the sword, is said to mark the spot where he was buried.

the church of Edessa, at the intercession of his Christian subjects.

The destruction of the Saracen expedition against Constantinople, and the advantage which the mountaineers of Libanon had contrived to take of the absence of the Arab troops, by carrying their incursions into the plains of Syria, convinced Moawyah of the necessity of peace. The hardy mountaineers of Libanon, called Mardaïtes, had been increased in numbers, and supplied with wealth, in consequence of the retreat into their country of a mass of native Syrians who had fled before the Arabs.\* They consisted chiefly of Melchites and Monothelites, and on that account they had adhered to the cause of the Roman empire when the Monophysites joined the Saracens. Their Syrian origin renders it probable that they were the ancestors of the Maronites, though the desire of some modern Maronite historians to shew that their countrymen were always perfectly orthodox, has perplexed a question which of itself was by no means of easy solution.† The political state of the empire required peace; and the orthodox Constantine did not feel personally inclined to run any risk in order to protect the Monothelite Mardaïtes. Peace was concluded between the emperor and the caliph in the year 679, Moawyah consenting to pay the Romans annually three thou-

\* The earliest mention of the Mardaïtes is found in THEOPHANIS *Chron.* p. 295.

† MOSHEIM'S *Ecclesiastical History*, with notes by James Murdock, D.D. Newhaven, 1832. 3 vols. 8vo. vol. i. 538. This American edition of Mosheim is greatly superior to the old translation, and the notes are valuable.

sand pounds of gold, fifty slaves, and fifty Arabian horses. It appears strange that a prince possessing the power and resources at the command of Moawyah, should submit to these conditions; but the fact affords proof that policy, not pride, was the rule of the caliph's conduct, and that the advancement of his real power, and of the interests of the Mohammedan religion, were of more consequence in his eyes, than any fanciful notions of etiquette and dignity.

Moawyah had been induced, by the situation of his affairs, to purchase peace by consenting to pay tribute to the Roman emperor; Constantine himself was compelled to become tributary to a small horde of Bulgarians. One of the usual emigrations which take place amongst barbarous nations, had induced Asparuch, a Bulgarian chief, to seize the low country about the mouth of the Danube; his power and activity induced the Emperor Constantine to take the field against these Bulgarians in person. The expedition was so ill conducted, that it ended in the complete defeat of the Roman army, while the Bulgarians subdued all the country between the Danube and Mount Hæmus, compelling a district inhabited by a body of Slavonians called the seven tribes, to become their tributaries. These Slavonians had once been formidable to the empire, but their power had been broken by the Emperor Constans. Asparuch established himself in the town of Varna, near the ancient Odessas, and laid the foundation of the Bulgarian monarchy, a kingdom long engaged in hostilities with the emperors of Constantinople, and whose power tended greatly to accelerate the decline

of the Greeks, and reduce the numbers of their race in Europe. To this horde of barbarians, Constantine was compelled to pay tribute.\*

The event, however, which exercised the most favourable influence on the internal condition of the empire, during the reign of Constantine Pogonatus, was the assembly of the sixth general council of the church at Constantinople. This council was held under circumstances peculiarly favourable to candid discussion. The ecclesiastical power was not yet too strong to set both reason and the civil authorities at defiance. Its decisions were adverse to the Monothelites; and the orthodox doctrine of two natures and two wills in Christ, was received, by the common consent of the Greek and Latin parties, as the true rule of faith of the Christian church. Religious discussion had now taken a strong hold on public opinion, and as the majority of the Greek population had never adopted the opinions of the Monothelites, the decisions of the sixth general council contributed powerfully to promote the union of the Greeks with the imperial administration.

#### SECTION V. — DEPOPULATION OF THE EMPIRE, AND DECREASE OF THE GREEKS, UNDER JUSTINIAN THE SECOND.

JUSTINIAN the Second succeeded his father Constantine at the age of sixteen, and though so very young, he immediately assumed the personal direction of the government. He was by no means destitute

\* DUCANGE, *Familia Byzantina*, p. 305. THEOPHANIS Ch. 298.

of talents, but his cruel and presumptuous character rendered him incapable of learning to perform the duties of his situation with justice. His violence at last rendered him hateful to his subjects; and as the connection of the emperor with the Roman government and people was direct and personal, his power was so undermined by the loss of his influence, that, in the ninth year of his reign, he was easily driven from the throne by a popular sedition. His nose was cut off, and he was banished to Cherson. In exile, his energy and activity enabled him to secure the alliance of the Khazars and of the Bulgarians, and he returned to Constantinople as a conqueror, after an absence of ten years. His character was one of those to which experience is useless, and he persisted in his former course of violence, until, having exhausted the patience of his subjects, he was dethroned and murdered.

The reign of such a tyrant was not likely to be inactive; and, at its commencement, he turned his arms against the Saracens, without respecting the peace which had been concluded with his father. He sent a powerful army into Armenia under Leontius, who subsequently dethroned him. All the provinces, where any disposition to favour the Saracens had appeared, were laid waste, and the army carried off an immense booty and crowds of slaves. The barbarism of the Roman government had now reached such a pitch, that the Roman armies were permitted to plunder the provinces which the emperor might still hope to retain in permanent subjection to the empire. A Christian population was carried away captive, and the most

flourishing agricultural districts reduced to deserts, incapable of offering any resistance to the Mohammedan nomads. The Caliph Abdalmalik, being engaged in a struggle for the caliphate with powerful rivals, and disturbed by rebels even in his own Syrian dominions, proposed a peace to Justinian, which was concluded on terms still more favourable to the empire, than those of the treaty between Constantine and Moawyah. The caliph engaged to pay the emperor an annual tribute of three hundred and sixty-five thousand pieces of gold, three hundred and sixty slaves, and three hundred and sixty Arabian horses. The revenues and provinces of Iberia, Armenia, and Cyprus, were equally divided between the Romans and the Arabs; but Justinian consented not only to abandon the cause of the Mardaïtes, but even engaged to assist the caliph in expelling them from Syria. This was effected by the treachery of Leontius, who entered their country as a friend and murdered their chief. Twelve thousand Mardaïte soldiers were enrolled in the armies of the empire, and distributed in garrisons in Armenia and Thrace. A colony of Mardaïtes was established at Attalia in Pamphylia, and the power of this valiant people was completely broken. The removal of the Mardaïtes from Syria was one of the most serious errors of the reign of Justinian. As long as they remained in force on Mount Libanon, near the centre of the Saracen power, the emperor was able to render them a serious check on the Mohammedans, and create dangerous diversions whenever the caliphs invaded the empire. Unfortunately, in this age of religious bigotry the Monothelite opinions of the

Mardaïtes made them an object of aversion or suspicion to the imperial administration; and even under the prudent government of Constantine Pogonatus, they were not viewed with a friendly eye, nor did they receive the support which should have been granted to them on a just consideration of the interests of Christianity, as well as of the Roman empire.

The general depopulation of the empire suggested to many of the Roman emperors the project of repeopling favoured districts, by an influx of inhabitants. The origin of many of the most celebrated cities of the eastern empire could be traced back to small Greek colonies. These emigrants, it was known, had rapidly increased in number, and risen to wealth. The Roman government never perceived the causes which prevented the emigrations effected by the emperors from attaining the same prosperity, and the attempt at repeopling provinces, and removing the population of one district to new seats, was frequently renewed. Justinian the Second had a great taste for these emigrations. Three years after the conclusion of peace with Abdalmalik, the emperor resolved to withdraw all the inhabitants from the half of the island of Cyprus, of which he remained master, in order to prevent the Christians from becoming accustomed to the Saracen administration. The Cypriate population was transported to a new city near Cyzicus, which the emperor called after himself, Justinianopolis. It is needless to offer any remarks on the impolicy of such a project; the loss of life, and the destruction of property inevitable in the execution of such a scheme, could only have



been replaced under the most favourable circumstances, and by a long career of prosperity. It is known that, in consequence of this desertion, many of the Cypriate towns fell into complete ruin, from which they have never since emerged.

Justinian, at the commencement of his reign, made a successful expedition into the country occupied by the Sclavonians in Macedonia, who were now closely allied with the Bulgarian principality beyond Mount Hæmus. This people, imboldened by their increased force, had pushed their plundering excursions as far as the Propontis. The imperial army was completely successful, and both the Sclavonians and their Bulgarian allies were defeated. In order to repopulate the fertile shores of the Hellespont about Abydos, Justinian transplanted a number of the Sclavonian families into the province of Opsicium. This colony was so numerous and powerful, that it furnished a considerable contingent to the imperial armies.\*

The peace with the Saracens was not of long duration. Justinian refused to receive the first gold pieces coined by Abdalmelik, which bore the legend, "God is the Lord." The tribute had previously been paid in money from the municipal mints of Syria; and Justinian conceived that the new Arabian coinage was an attack on the Holy Trinity. He led his army in person against the Saracens, and a battle took place near Sebastopolis,

\* 20,000, if we may credit Theophanes, p. 305, for we must suppose all the Sclavonians deserted; but a note of Saint Martin to his edition of Le Beau, (*Histoire du Bas-Empire*, xii. 22,) mentions that an Armenian historian gives the more probable number of 7000 cavalry.

on the coast of Cilicia, in which he was entirely defeated, in consequence of the treason of the leader of his Slavonian troops. Justinian fled from the field of battle, and having visited, on his way to the capital, some of the Slavonian colonies, which he had established in Asia Minor, he ordered the wives and children of the Slavonian soldiers, who had deserted his standard, to be murdered. The deserters were established by the Saracens in the neighbourhood of Antioch, on the coast of Syria, and in the Island of Cyprus; and under the government of the caliph, they were more prosperous than under that of the Roman emperor. It was during this war that the Saracens inflicted the severest blow on the Christian population of their dominions. Abdalmelik established the Haratch, or Christian capitation tax, in order to raise money to carry on the war with Justinian. This unfortunate mode of taxing the Christian subjects of the caliph, in a different manner from the Mohammedans, completely separated the two classes, and reduced the Christians to the rank of serfs of the state, whose most prominent political relation with the Mussulman community, was that of furnishing money in all the exigencies of the government. The decline and ruin of the Christian population, through the dominions of the caliphs, were the consequences of this ill-judged measure, which has, probably, tended more to the depopulation of the East, than all the tyranny and military violence of the Mohammedan armies. The restless spirit of Justinian naturally plunged into the ecclesiastical controversies which divided the church. He assem-

bled a general council, called usually *in Trullo*, from the hall of its meeting having been covered with a dome. The proceedings of this council, as might have been expected from those of an assembly controlled by such a spirit as that of the emperor, tended only to increase the growing differences between the Greek and Latin parties in the church. Of one hundred and two canons sanctioned by this council, the pope finally rejected six, as adverse to the usages of the Latins.\* And thus, an additional cause of separation was permanently created between the Greeks and Latins, and the measures of the church, as well as the political arrangements of the times, and the social feelings of the people, all tended to render union impossible.

A fancy for building is a common taste of sovereigns who possess the absolute disposal of large funds, without any feeling of duty as trustees for the benefit of the people whom they govern. Even in the midst of the greatest public distress, the treasury of a nation, though on the very verge of ruin and bankruptcy, must, nevertheless, contain large sums of money drawn from the annual taxation. This treasure, if placed at the irresponsible disposal of princes, who affect celebrity or magnificence, is frequently employed in useless and ornamental building; and this fashion has been so general with

\* MOSHEIM'S *Eccles. History* by Murdock, i. 539. The six canons rejected were—the fifth, which approves of the eighty-five apostolic canons, commonly attributed to Clement; the thirteenth, which allows priests to live in wedlock; the fifty-fifth, which condemns fasting on Saturdays; the sixty-seventh, which earnestly enjoins abstinence from blood and things strangled; the eighty-second, which prohibits the painting of Christ in the image of a lamb; and the eighty-sixth, concerning the equality of the bishops of Rome and Constantinople.—Schlegel's note.

despots, that the princes who have been most distinguished for their love of building, have not unfrequently been the worst and most oppressive sovereigns. It is always a delicate and difficult task for a sovereign to estimate the amount which a nation can wisely afford to expend on ornamental architecture; and, from his position, he is seldom qualified to judge correctly on what buildings ornament ought to be employed, in order to make art accord with the taste and feelings of the people. Public opinion affords the only criterion for the formation of a sound judgment on this department of public administration; for, when princes possessing a taste for building are not compelled to consult the wants and wishes of their subjects, in the construction of national edifices, they are apt, by their wild projects and lavish expenditure, to create evils in the state far greater than any which could result from an exhibition of bad taste alone.

In an evil hour, the love of building took possession of Justinian's mind. His lavish expenditure soon obliged him to make his financial administration more rigorous, and general discontent quickly pervaded the capital. The religious and superstitious feelings of the population were severely wounded by the emperor's eagerness to destroy a church of the Virgin, in order to embellish the vicinity of his palace with a splendid fountain. Justinian's own scruples required to be soothed by a religious ceremony, but the patriarch for some time refused to officiate, alleging that the church had no prayers to desecrate holy buildings. The emperor, however, was the head of the church and the

master of the priesthood, whom he could easily remove from office, so that the patriarch did not long dare to refuse obedience to his orders. It is said, however, that the patriarch shewed very clearly his dissatisfaction, by repairing to the spot, and authorizing the destruction of the church by an ecclesiastical ceremony, to which he added these words, "to God, who suffers all things, be rendered glory, now and for ever. Amen." The ceremony was sufficient to satisfy the conscience of the emperor, who perhaps neither heard nor heeded the words of the patriarch. The public discontent was loudly expressed, and Justinian soon perceived that the fury of the populace threatened a rebellion in Constantinople. To avert the danger, he took every measure which unscrupulous cruelty could suggest ; but, as generally happens in periods of general discontent and excitement, the storm burst in an unexpected quarter, and the hatred of Justinian left him suddenly without support. Leontius, one of the ablest generals of the empire, had been thrown into prison, but was at this time ordered to assume the government of Achæa. He considered the nomination as a mere pretext to remove him from the capital, and put him to death at a distance without any trial. On the eve of his departure, Leontius placed himself at the head of a sedition ; Justinian was seized, and his ministers were murdered by the populace with the most savage cruelty. Leontius was proclaimed emperor, but he spared the life of his dethroned predecessor for the sake of the benefits which he had received from Constantine Pogonatus. He ordered Justinian's nose to be cut off, and exiled him to Cherson.

## SECTION VI.—CONFUSED STATE OF THE ADMINISTRATION UNDER A SUCCESSION OF EMPERORS.

THE government of Leontius was characterized by the unsteadiness which not unfrequently marks the administration of the ablest sovereigns, who obtain their thrones by accidental circumstances rather than systematic combinations. The most important event of his reign was the final loss of Africa, which also led to his own dethronement. The indefatigable Caliph Abdalmelik despatched a powerful expedition into Africa under Hasan; the province was soon conquered, and Carthage was captured, after a feeble resistance.\* An expedition sent by Leontius to relieve the province, arrived too late to save Carthage, but the commander-in-chief forced the entrance into the port, recovered possession of the city, and drove the Arabs from most of the fortified towns on the coast. The Arabs constantly received new reinforcements, which the Roman general demanded from Leontius in vain. At last the Arabs assembled a fleet, and the Romans being defeated in a naval engagement, were compelled to abandon Carthage, which the Arabs utterly destroyed,—having too often experienced the superiority of the Romans, both in naval affairs and in the art of war, to venture on retaining populous and fortified cities on the sea coast. This curious fact affords strong proof of the great

\* Carthage was founded B. C. 878. The Tyrian colony was exterminated by the Romans, B. C. 146. The Roman colony of Carthage was founded by Julius Cæsar B. C. 44, and destroyed by the Arabs A. D. 698.

superiority of the Roman commerce and naval resources, and equally powerful evidence of the shameful disorder in the civil and military administration of the empire, which rendered these advantages useless, and allowed the fleets of the Greeks to be defeated by the naval forces collected by the Arabs, from among their Egyptian and Syrian subjects. At the same time, it is evident that the naval victories of the Arabs could never have been gained, unless a powerful party of the Christians had been induced, by their feelings of hostility to the Roman empire, to afford them a willing support ; for the Saracens had neither shipbuilders nor sailors among the Mussulmans.

The Roman expedition, on its retreat from Carthage, stopped in the Island of Crete, where a sedition broke out among the troops, in which their general was killed. Apsimar, the commander of the Cibyrraiot troops, was declared emperor by the name of Tiberius, and the fleet proceeded directly to Constantinople, which they captured.\* Leontius was taken prisoner, his nose cut off, and his person confined in a monastery. Tiberius Apsimar governed the empire with prudence, and his brother Heraclius commanded the Roman armies with success. The imperial troops penetrated into Syria ; a victory was

\* The Cibyrraiot Theme included the ancient Caria, Lycia, Pamphylia, and a part of Phrygia, Cibyra Magna, a considerable town at the angle of Phrygia, Caria, and Lycia. Tiberius Cæsar was regarded as its second founder, from his having remitted the tribute after a severe earthquake. *TACITI ANN.* iv. 13. From him Apsimar must have taken the name of Tiberius, and not from the emperor of Constantinople, of better fame. Constantine Porphyrogenitus, indeed, says the theme in question was named from the insignificant town of Cibyra in Pamphylia ; but his authority is of little value on such a point. *De Them.* lib. i. p. 16.

gained over the Arabs at Samosata, but the ravages of the Romans in their invasion, surpassed the greatest cruelties ever inflicted by the Arabs; for two hundred thousand Saracens are said to have perished during the campaign. Armenia was invaded and laid waste both by the Romans and the Saracens, as the various turns of war, and the changing interests of the Armenian population, induced them to favour the contending parties. But while Tiberius was occupied in the duties of government, and living without any fear of a domestic enemy, he was suddenly surprised in his capital by Justinian, who appeared before Constantinople at the head of a Bulgarian army.

Ten years of exile had been spent by the banished emperor in vain attempts to obtain power. His violent proceedings made him every where detested, but he possessed the daring enterprize and the ferocious cruelty necessary for a chief of banditti, joined to his confidence in his lawful claim to the imperial throne; so that no undertaking appeared to him hopeless. After quarreling with the inhabitants of Cherson, and with his brother-in-law, the king of the Khazars, he succeeded, by a desperate exertion of courage, in reaching the country of the Bulgarians. Terbelis, their sovereign, agreed to assist him in recovering his throne, and they marched immediately with a Bulgarian army to the walls of Constantinople. Three days after their arrival, they succeeded in entering the capital during the night. Ten years of adversity had increased the natural ferocity of Justinian's disposition; and a desire of vengeance, so unreasonable as to verge on madness,



seemed to be the chief motive of his actions. The population of Constantinople had now sunk to the same degree of barbarism as the nations surrounding them, and in cruelty they were worthy subjects of their emperor. Justinian gratified them by celebrating his restoration with splendid chariot races in the circus. He sate on an elevated throne, with his feet resting on the necks of the dethroned emperors, Leontius and Tiberius, who were stretched on the platform below, while the Greek populace around shouted the words of the Psalmist, "Thou shalt tread down the asp and the basilisk, thou shalt trample on the lion and the dragon."\* The dethroned emperors, and Heraclius, who had so well sustained the glory of the Roman arms against the Saracens, were afterwards hung from the battlements of Constantinople. Justinian's whole soul was devoted to executing his plans of vengeance. Though the conquest of Tyana laid open Asia Minor to the incursions of the Saracens, instead of opposing them, he directed his disposable forces to punish the cities of Ravenna and Cherson, because they had incurred his personal hatred. Both the proscribed cities had rejoiced at his dethronement; they were both taken and treated with savage cruelty. The extermination of Cherson was decided; but the troops sent to execute the barbarous orders having revolted, proclaimed an Armenian, called Bardanes, emperor, under the name of Philippicus;† and

\* These are the words of the Septuagint, Psal. xc. 13. In our version, Psal. xci. 13, the passage stands, "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet."

† Theophanes calls him the son of Nicephorus the Patrician. P. 311. Nicephorus Pat. mentions that he was an Armenian. P. 50, ed. Bonn.

seizing the fleet, sailed directly to Constantinople. Justinian was encamped with his army in Asia Minor, when Philippicus arrived, and took possession of the capital without encountering any resistance. The troops were as little pleased with Justinian's conduct since his restoration, as was every other class of his subjects; but his ferocity and courage never failed him, and his rage was unbounded when he found himself abandoned by every one. He was seized and executed without having it in his power to offer the slightest resistance. His son Tiberius, though only six years of age, was torn from the altar of a church, to which he had been conducted for safety, and cruelly massacred; and thus the race of Heraclius was extinguished, after the family had governed the Roman empire for exactly a century. A. D. 611 to 711.

During the interval of six years which elapsed from the death of Justinian the Second to the accession of Leo the Isaurian, the imperial throne was occupied by three sovereigns. Their history is only remarkable as proving the inherent strength of the Roman body politic, which could survive such continual revolutions, even in the state of weakness to which it was reduced. Philippicus was a luxurious and extravagant prince, who thought only of enjoying the situation which he had obtained. He was soon dethroned by a band of conspirators, who carried him off from the palace while in a fit of drunkenness, and after putting out his eyes, left him helpless in the middle of the hippodrome. The reign of Philippicus would hardly deserve notice, had he not increased the confusion into which the empire had

fallen, and exposed the total want of character and conscience among the Greek clergy, by re-establishing the Monothelite doctrines, in a general council of the eastern bishops.

As the conspirators who had dethroned Philippicus, had formed no plan of fixing on any one of their own party as his successor, the first secretary of state was called to the imperial dignity with general approbation, under the name of Anastasius the Second. He immediately re-established the orthodox faith, and his character is consequently the subject of eulogy with the historians of his reign. The Saracens, whose power was continually increasing, were at this time preparing a great expedition at Alexandria, in order to attack Constantinople. Anastasius sent a fleet with the troops of the theme Opsicium, to destroy the magazines of timber collected on the coast Phœnicia, for the purpose of assisting the preparations at Alexandria. The Roman armament was commanded by a deacon of St Sophia, who also held the office of grand treasurer of the empire. The nomination of a priest to command the army gave great dissatisfaction to the troops, who were not yet so deeply tinctured with ecclesiastical ideas and manners, as the aristocracy of the eastern empire. A sedition took place while the army lay at Rhodes: John the Deacon was slain, and the expedition quitted the port in order to return to the capital. The soldiers, on their way landed at Adramyttium, and finding there a collector of the revenues of a popular character, they declared him emperor, under the name of Theodosius the Third.

The new emperor was compelled unwillingly to follow the army. For six months, Constantinople was closely besieged, and the Emperor Anastasius, who had retired to Nicæa, was defeated in a general engagement. The capital was at last taken by the rebels, who were so deeply sensible of their real interests, that they maintained strict discipline, and Anastasius, whose weakness gave little confidence to his followers, consented to resign the empire to Theodosius, and to retire into a monastery, that he might secure an amnesty to all his friends. Theodosius was distinguished by many good qualities, but on the throne he proved a perfect cypher, and his reign is only remarkable as affording a pretext for the assumption of the imperial dignity by Leo the Third, called the Isaurian. This able and enterprising officer, perceiving that the critical times rendered the empire the prize of any man who had talents to seize, and power to defend it, placed himself at the head of the troops in Asia Minor, and when proclaimed emperor, soon compelled Theodosius to quit the throne and become a priest.

SECTION VII.—A CHANGE TAKES PLACE IN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE EMPIRE UNDER LEO THE ISAURIAN.

It has been already observed, that with the reign of Leo the Isaurian, a new era begins in the history of the East, and that from it we must date the commencement of the Byzantine monarchy. The subjects of the imperial court were now princi-

pally of the Greek race and language, and of the orthodox church. It seems probable, therefore, that if the Greek nation and the Constantinopolitan government had been guided by similar feelings, a complete amalgamation of interests and views would immediately have taken place. This did not happen; the new emperor, from his religious opinions, engaged the imperial administration in a direct contest with the Greek nation, a contest which was transmitted to his successors, not only in the form of a political and ecclesiastical, but also of a national controversy. The edict of Leo published in 726 against the worship of pictures in churches, was the origin of this long struggle. It soon displayed the fact, that the national feelings of the Greeks were more powerful than the systematic administration of the empire, since the emperor could no longer call into operation against them the resources and prejudices of the provincial and heretic population. The contest which Leo carried on, prevented the ascendancy of the Greek people and church from being finally established, until a new revolution in the imperial court, more than a century after the death of Leo, gave a permanent ascendancy to the orthodox ecclesiastical party in the empire, (A. D. 842.) Still, as the views which influenced the emperor and the court of Constantinople in the struggle concerning picture-worship, had no connection with any preceding conduct of the imperial government, and as the policy and prejudices of Leo were at variance with the system of the Roman government, even in its last state of degeneracy under the descendants of Heraclius, from their deep tincture of Asiatic

opinions, it seems on the whole, that no better period can be fixed upon for terminating the history of the Greek people under the domination of the Romans, than that of the accession of Leo. A new era of history then opens, marked by the extraordinary influence which religious opinions exercised in society; so powerful indeed did these become, that they prevailed over political and national interests in the earlier portion of the history of the Byzantine court.

There is, however, one fact worthy of note connected with the iconoclastic struggle, which requires to be related here, as it affords the best data that we possess for illustrating the condition of the Greek people during this period. A remarkable rebellion of the inhabitants of ancient Hellas, and the islands of the Archipelago, occurred immediately after the promulgation of the edict against picture-worship.\* The interval was so short, that it is evident the imperial ordinance furnished only the immediate occasion of the outbreak, which must have been already prepared by a long period of dissatisfaction originating in other causes. These Greeks, enraged, as historians relate, at the orders of Leo to place the pictures in the churches in so elevated a position, that the orthodox could no longer kiss them, determined to drive the heretic emperor from the throne of Constantinople.† They collected a numerous fleet, and a powerful army, and declared a

\* The edict was published in 726. The Greek fleet arrived at Constantinople on the 18th April, 727. Note in Theophanes, p. 72. ed. Venet.

† NICEPH. PAT. p. 37. THEOPHANES *Ch.* 339. CEDRENI *Hist. Compend.* i. 454.

native Greek, named Cosmas, the lawful emperor of the orthodox. The command of the troops was given to a Greek officer named Agallianos; and the expedition boldly proceeded to attack the emperor in his capital. The confidence of the Greeks, in thus venturing to attempt the conquest of Constantinople, and their hopes of succeeding in driving Leo from the throne, which he had apparently strengthened by defeating a powerful Saracen army and fleet, are only explicable on the supposition that the national feelings of the whole Greek race were strongly excited by the struggle. The Greeks must have felt strong in their own valour, and enthusiastic in the goodness of the cause; but they appear to have greatly overrated their own strength, or strangely to have overlooked the power and ability of their enemy. Leo defeated the expedition, in a naval engagement, as it approached the capital, by availing himself of the Greek fire, a defence which had often saved the empire from the attacks of the Saracens. The general, Agallianos, plunged into the sea rather than surrender, but the rebel emperor was taken prisoner and beheaded. Leo treated the great mass of his prisoners with unusual generosity; but it is difficult, from our scanty knowledge of the facts, to decide whether his conduct was the effect of policy or contempt. Even if we admit that the Greeks displayed considerable presumption in this daring assault on a city so populous and powerful as Constantinople, and which, but ten years before, had defeated the flower of the Saracen armies under Moslemah, their ablest general, and destroyed an immense fleet, collected with

great care, and manned by the best sailors of Phœnicia, Egypt, and Africa ; still the attempt proves, that the wealth and numbers of the Greeks were united to considerable national energy, and a bold love of independence. Adverse circumstances, and the immediate vicinity of the wealth and powerful central government of Constantinople, prevented this independent spirit of the Greeks from producing any effect on the history of the nation, or developing its social influence, under a system of free municipal government like that which conferred wealth and glory on Venice, Amalfi, and Ragusa. This rebellion, however, affords the last link in a long chain of evidence, which establishes, that even to the very latest moment of their subjection to the Roman power, the Greeks in Europe clung steadily to their ancient national feelings as a separate people. When the Roman empire appeared on the brink of death, the opportunity which was offered of regaining their liberty was eagerly seized ; but with the imperfect political knowledge of the times, it was rashly linked with a scheme of conquering the capital, instead of being restricted to the assertion of independence, and the defence of their native homes.

During the period which elapsed between the death of Heraclius and the accession of Leo, the few remains of Roman principles of administration, which had lingered in the imperial court, were gradually extinguished. The long cherished hope of restoring the ancient power and glory of the Roman empire expired, and even the aristocracy, which always clings the last to antiquated forms and ideas, no



longer dwelt with confidence on the memory of former days. The conviction, that the empire had undergone a great moral and political change, which severed the future irrevocably from the past, though it was probably not fully understood, was at least felt and acted on both by the people and the government. The sad fact, that the splendid sun, which had illuminated the ancient world, had now set as completely at Constantinople as at Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, and Carthage, was too evident to be longer doubted; the very twilight of antiquity had faded into darkness. It is rather, however, the province of the antiquary, than of the historian, to collect all the traces of this truth, scattered over the space of two centuries.

There is one curious and important circumstance in the history of the latter days of the Roman empire, of which little beyond the mere fact has been transmitted by historians. A long and violent contention between the imperial power and the aristocracy, which represented the last degenerate remains of the Roman senate and people, distracted the councils and confounded the energy of the Roman government. This great struggle commenced in the reign of Maurice, and, under various modifications, appears at intervals during the whole period of the government of the family of Heraclius. This aristocratic influence had more of a Greek than of a Roman character; its feelings and views had originated in the days of the Macedonian rather than of the Roman empire; and both Heraclius and Constans the Second, in their schemes for circumscribing its authority in the state, resolved to remove the capital

of the empire from Constantinople. Both conceived the vain hope of re-establishing the imperial power on a purely Roman basis, as a means of subduing, or at least controlling, the power of Greek nationality, which was gaining ground both in the state and the church. This contest appears to have terminated in the destruction of the Roman empire. Its well organized civil administration perished utterly; the Byzantine aristocracy and the Greek clergy were humbled; and the political government became a mere arbitrary despotism, differing little from the prevailing form of monarchy in the East, and deprived of all those fundamental institutions, and that systematic character, which had enabled the Roman state to survive the extravagancies of Nero and the incapacity of Phocas.

The disorganization of the Roman government at this period, and the want of any influence over the court by the Greek nation, are visible in the choice of the persons who occupied the imperial throne after the extinction of the family of Heraclius. They were selected by accident, and several were of foreign origin, who did not even look upon themselves as either Greeks or Romans. Philippicus was an Armenian, and Leo the Isaurian, whose reign opens a new vista in eastern history, talks of himself as born in the Roman empire, a statement that distinctly implies that he did not consider himself either as a Greek or a Roman.\* On the throne he proved that this was his real opinion, and that he was destitute of any attachment to Roman political institu-

\* THEOPHANIS *Ch.* p. 330, καὶ γινεῖ ὑπὸ τὴν βασιλείαν Ρωμαίων.

tions, and any respect for the Greek ecclesiastical establishment. It was by the force of his talents, and by his able direction of the state and of the army, that he succeeded in securing his family on the Byzantine throne; for he unquestionably placed himself in direct hostility to the feelings and opinions of the majority of his subjects, and transmitted to his successors a contest between the imperial power and the Greek nation concerning picture-worship, in which the very existence of Greek nationality, civilization, and religion, became at last compromised. From the commencement of the iconoclastic contest, the history of the Greek people assumes a new aspect. Their civilization, and their connection with the Byzantine empire, become linked with the policy and fortunes of the eastern church, and ecclesiastical affairs obtain a supremacy over all social and political considerations.

The geographical extent of the empire at the time of its transition from the Roman to the Byzantine state, will afford evidence of the influence which the territorial changes must have exercised on the national feelings of the subjects, and of the exclusive importance acquired by the Greek race. The frontier towards the Saracens of Syria commenced at Mopsuestia in Cilicia, the last fortress of the Arab power. It ran along the chains of Mounts Amanus and Taurus to the mountainous district to the north of Edessa and Nisibis, called, after the time of Justinian, the Fourth Armenia, of which Martyropolis was the capital. It then followed nearly the ancient limits of the empire until it reached the Black Sea, a short distance to the east of Trebizond. On the northern

shores of the Euxine, Cherson was now the only city that acknowledged the supremacy of the empire, retaining at the same time all the municipal privileges of a free city. In Europe, Mount Hæmus formed the barrier against the Bulgarians, while the mountainous ranges which bound Macedonia to the north-west, and encircle the territory of Dyrrachium, were regarded as the limits of the free Slavonian states. It is true that large bodies of Slavonians had penetrated to the south of this line, and lived in Greece and Peloponnesus, but not quite as independent of the imperial administration as their northern brethren of the Servian family.

Istria, Venice, and the cities on the Dalmatian coast, still acknowledged the supremacy of the empire, though their distant position, their commercial connections, and their religious feelings, were all tending towards a final separation. In the centre of Italy, the exarchate of Ravenna still held Rome in subjection, but the people of Italy were entirely alienated from the political administration, which was now regarded as purely Greek, and the Italians, with Rome before their eyes, could hardly admit the pretensions of the Greeks to be regarded as the legitimate representatives of the Roman empire. The loss of northern and central Italy was consequently an event in constant danger of occurring; and it would have required an able, energetic, and just government, to have repressed the national feelings of the Italians, and conciliated their allegiance. The condition of the population of the south of Italy and of Sicily was very different. There the majority of the inhabitants were Greeks in

language and manners; but still at this time the cities of Gaeta, Naples, Amalfi, and Sorento, the district of Otranto, and the peninsula to the south of the ancient Sybaris, now called Calabria, were the only parts which remained under the Byzantine government. Sicily, though it had begun to suffer from the incursions of the Saracens, was still populous and wealthy; but Sardinia, the last possession of the Greeks to the westward of Italy, was conquered by the Saracens about this time.

SECTION VIII. — GENERAL VIEW OF THE CONDITION OF  
THE GREEKS AT THE EXTINCTION OF THE ROMAN  
POWER IN THE EAST.

IN order to conclude the view which, in the preceding pages, we have endeavoured to present of the various causes that gradually diminished the power, the numbers, and the influence of the Greek race, it is necessary to add a sketch of the position of the nation at the commencement of the eighth century. At this unfortunate period in the history of mankind, the Greeks were placed in imminent danger of that annihilation which had already destroyed their Roman conquerors. The victories of the Arabs were attended with very different consequences to the Greek population of the countries which they subdued, from those which had followed the conquests of the Romans. Like the earlier domination of the Parthians, the Arab power was employed in such a manner, as ultimately to exterminate the whole Greek population in all the conquered countries;

and though, for a short period, the Arabs, like their predecessors the Parthians, protected Greek art and Grecian civilization, their policy soon changed, and the Greeks were proscribed. The little of art and science which flourished at the court of the caliphs was chiefly derived from the resources and literature of their Syrian Christian subjects, whose acquaintance both with Syriac and Greek opened to them an extensive range of scientific literature utterly lost to the moderns. It is to be observed, that a very great number of the eminent literary and scientific authors of later Greek literature were Asiatics, and that these writers frequently made use of their native languages in those useful and scientific works which were intended for practical instruction to their own countrymen. In Egypt and Cyrenaïca the Greek population was soon exterminated by the Arabs, and every trace of Grecian civilization was much sooner effaced than in Syria; though even there no very long interval elapsed before a small remnant of the Greek population was all that survived. Antioch itself, long the third city of the eastern empire, the spot where the Christians had first received their name,\* and the principal seat of Greek civilization in Asia for upwards of nine centuries, though it was not depopulated and razed to the ground like Alexandria and Carthage, nevertheless soon ceased to be a Grecian city.

The numerous Greek colonies which had flourished in the Tauric Chersonese, and on the eastern and northern shores of the Euxine, were now almost all

\* Acts, xi. 26.

deserted. Cherson, which had for centuries retained its independence beyond the bounds of the Roman empire, as a wealthy state, and a useful ally of Rome, alone retained its character as a Greek city, but subject to the court of Constantinople.\* The other cities of Tauris had submitted to the Khazars, who now occupied all the open country with their flocks and herds; and the Chersonites, shut out from the cultivation of the rich lands, whose harvests had formerly supplied Athens with grain, were entirely supported by foreign commerce. Their numerous ships exchanged the hides, wax, and salt fish of the neighbouring districts, for the necessaries and luxuries of a city life, in Constantinople, and along the southern shores of the Black Sea.† It affords matter for reflection to find, that Cherson, — situated in a climate which, from the foundation of the colony, opposed insurmountable barriers to the introduction of much of the peculiar character of Greek social civilization, and which deprived the art, and the popular literature of the mother country, of some portion of their charm, — to whose inhabitants the Greek temple, and the Greek theatre, must ever have remained articles of luxury,

\* GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall*, iii. 124. CONSTANT. PORPHYR. *De adm. imp.* c. 53.

† Leucon, king of Bosphorus, (B. C. 393 — 353,) once sent to Athens, from the Tauric Chersonese, in a year of scarcity, upwards of three millions bushels of grain. The ordinary importation was about six hundred thousand. STRABO, vii. c. iv. vol. 2. 97. ed. Tauch. DEMOSTHENES in *Leptin.* 467. In the time of Strabo, the eastern part of the Chersonese was a country very fertile in grain; but in that of Constantine Porph., Cherson imported corn, wine, and oil as foreign luxuries. Gibbon, in copying Const. Porph. when speaking of the time of Justinian the Second, omits to notice the commercial prosperity of the place, and represents it as a lonely settlement. ix. 18. See pp. 170, 171.

and not portions of existence,—should still have preserved, to this late period of history, both its Greek municipal organization, and its independent civic government. It appears, too, from the testimony of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, to have continued to exist, as the last free city of the Greeks, in a condition of respectable independence, though under imperial protection, down to the middle of the tenth century.

In Greece itself, the Greeks had been driven from many fertile districts by the Slavonian tribes, that had established themselves in large bodies in Greece and the Peloponnesus, and had often pushed their plundering and piratical incursions among the islands of the Archipelago, from which they had carried off numerous bands of slaves.\* In the cities and islands which the Greeks still possessed, the secluded position of the population, and the exclusive attention which they were compelled to give to their local defence, introduced a degree of ignorance, which soon extinguished the last remains of Greek civilization, and effaced all knowledge of Greek literature. The diminished population of the European Greeks now occupied the shores of the Adriatic to the south of Dyrrachium, and the maritime districts of Greece, Macedonia, and Thrace, as far as Constantinople. The interior of the country was every where overrun by Slavonian colonies, though many mountainous districts, and most of the fortified places, still remained in the possession of the Greeks. It is, unfortunately, impossible to explain with pre-

\* NICEPH. PAT. pp. 49, 86. ed. Bonn,



cision the real nature and extent of the Slavonic colonization of Greece; and, indeed, before it be possible to decide how far it partook of conquest, and how far it resulted from the occupation of deserted and uncultivated lands, it becomes absolutely necessary to arrive at some definite information concerning the diminution which had taken place in the agricultural classes in the country, and of the social position of the slaves, serfs, or freemen, who survived in the depopulated districts. The scanty materials existing, render the inquiry one which can only engage the antiquary, who can stop to connect a few isolated facts; but the historian must turn away from the conjectures which would connect these facts into a system. The condition of social life, during the decline of the Roman empire, had led to the division of the provincial population into two classes, the urban and the rustic, or into citizens and peasants; and the superior position and greater security of the citizens or burghers, gradually enabled them to assume a political superiority over the free peasants, and at last to reduce them, in a great measure, to the rank of serfs.\* Slaves became, about the same time, of much greater relative value, and more difficult to be procured; and the distinction naturally arose between purchased slaves, who formed a part of the household and of the family of the possessor—and agricultural serfs, whose partial liberty was attended by the severest hardships, by a condition of the lowest degradation, and great personal danger. The

\* *Cod. Just.* xi. t. 49. l. 1. *Cod. Theod.* v. par. t. 9 and 11, &c.

population of Greece and the islands, in the time of Alexander the Great, may be estimated at three millions and a half;\* and probably half of this number consisted of slaves. During the vicissitudes of the Greek population under the Roman domination, the diminution of its numbers cannot have been less than the total amount of the whole slave population, though doubtless the diminution did not really take place in any one class of society. The extent, however, to which the general depopulation affected the agricultural population, and the value of labour, must be answered, before full light can be thrown on the real nature of the Slavonic and Albanian emigrations in Greece.†

In the island of Sicily, and in the south of Italy, the great bulk of the population was Greek, both in language and manners, and few portions of the Greek race had succeeded so well in preserving their wealth and property uninjured.‡

Even in Asia Minor the decline of the numbers of the Greek race had been rapid. This decline must, however, be attributed rather to bad government causing insecurity of property and difficulty of communication, than to hostile invasions; for from the period of the Persian invasions during the reign of Heraclius, the greater part of this immense country had enjoyed almost a century of uninterrupted

\* CLINTON'S *Fasti Hell.* vol. ii. p. 431.

† The high value of labour in many thinly peopled countries in a declining state, as Turkey, is a subject for curious investigation, as connected with the decline of one race of the population, and its replacement by another.

‡ For the antiquity of the Greek race and language in Magna Græcia, see NIEBUHR, *Hist. of Rome*, i. 61. Eng. trans. The Greek language continued in use until the fourteenth century.

peace. The Persian invasions had never been very injurious to the sea-coast, where the Greek cities were still numerous and wealthy; but oppression and neglect had already destroyed the internal trade of the central provinces, and education was becoming daily of less value to the inhabitants of the isolated and secluded districts of the interior.\* The Greek tongue began to be neglected, and the provincial dialects, corrupted by an admixture of the Lydian, Carian, Phrygian, and Cappadocian languages, became the ordinary medium of business and conversation. Bad government had caused poverty, poverty had produced barbarism, and the ignorance created by barbarism became the means of perpetuating an arbitrary and oppressive system of administration. The people, ignorant of all written language, felt unable to check the exercise of official abuses by the control of the law, and by direct application to the central administration. Their wish, therefore, was to abridge as much as possible all the proceedings of power; and as it was always more easy to save their persons than their properties from the subordinate officers of the administration, despotism became the favourite form of government with the great mass of the Asiatic population.

It is impossible to attempt any detailed examination of the changes which had taken place in the numbers of the Greek population in Asia Minor. The fact that extensive districts, once populous and wealthy, were already deserts, is proved by the colo-

\* The barbarism of the provincial Asiatics is often alluded to by the Byzantine writers. *Λυκάονας τινος ἢ λυκαοθρόπους*. THEOPHANIS *Chron.* 406.

nies which Justinian the Second settled in various parts of the country. The extent to which the emperor was able to carry these emigrations, shews that the population had disappeared more rapidly than the destruction of the agricultural resources of the country. The sudden settlement of the Sclavonians, so numerous that they were capable of furnishing an auxiliary army to the emperor, and the unexpected migration of nearly half of the inhabitants of the Island of Cyprus, without mentioning the Mardaïtes who were established in Asia Minor, could never have taken place unless houses, wells, fruit-trees, water-courses, enclosures, and roads, had existed in tolerable preservation, and thus furnished the new colonist with an immense amount of well employed labour. The fact, that these new colonies planted by Justinian the Second could survive and support themselves, seems a curious circumstance, when connected with the depopulation and declining state of the empire which led to their establishment.

One of the features of society at this period almost escapes the notice of the meagre historians whom we possess, though it must have existed to such an extent as materially to have aggravated the distress of the Greek population, and tended to diminish their numbers. Even had history been entirely silent on the subject, there could have been no doubt of the existence of numerous bands of brigands in the latter days of the Roman empire, from the knowledge which we have of the condition of the inhabitants, and of the geographical conformation of the land. History affords, however, a few casual glances of the extent of the evil. The existence of an extensive tribe of

brigands in the mountains of Thrace, during a period of two centuries, is proved by the testimony of authorities which the time and circumstances render unimpeachable. Menander mentions bands of robbers, under the name of Scamars, who plundered the ambassadors sent by the Avars to the Emperor Justin the Second; and these very Scamars continued to exist as an organized nation of robbers in the same district until the time of Constantine the Fifth, (Copronymus,) A. D. 765, when the capture and cruel torture of one of their chiefs is narrated by Theophanes.\*

History also affords us numerous isolated facts, which, when collected, produce on the mind the conviction, that the diminution in numbers, and the decline in civilization of the Greek race, were quite as much the effect of the oppression and injustice of the Roman government, as of the violence committed by the barbarian invaders of the empire. During the reign of that insane tyrant Justinian the Second, the imperial troops, when properly commanded, shewed, that the remembrance which they retained of Roman discipline, easily enabled them to defeat all their enemies in a fair field of battle. Leontius, and Heraclius, the brother of Tiberius Apsimar, were completely victorious over the redoubted Saracens; Justinian himself defeated the Bulgarians and Scythians. But the whole power of the empire was withdrawn from the people, to be concentrated in the government. The Greek municipal guards had been carefully deprived of their arms under

\* *Excerpta e Menandri Hist.* p. 313. ed. Bonn. THEOPHANIS *Chron.* 367.

Justinian the First, whose timid policy regarded internal rebellion as far more to be dreaded than foreign invasions. The sad truth, that the people every where hated the government, had been too constantly apparent for the maxims of the administration to have undergone any alteration at a subsequent period. The European Greeks were regarded as provincials just as much as the wild Lycaonians or Isaurians; and if they succeeded in resisting the Slavonians with arms in their hands, they really owed their existence to the weakness and neglect which, in all despotic governments, prevent the strict execution of those laws which are at variance with the feelings and interests of the population, the moment that the agents of the government can derive no direct profit from enforcing them.

The Roman government always threw the greatest difficulties in the way of their subjects' acquiring the means of defending themselves, without the aid of the imperial army. Justinian, however, when he disarmed his people, inflicted a more serious injury on the Greek cities than on the rest of his dominions; for while he dissolved their local militia, he likewise robbed them of the pecuniary resources which had enabled them to preserve their mental civilization and physical well-being. The feeling caused by his oppressive conduct, is well portrayed in the bitter satire of the secret history of Procopius. The hatred between the inhabitants of Hellas and the Roman Greeks connected with the imperial administration, soon became mutual, and at last a term of contempt is used by the historians of the Byzantine empire to

distinguish the native Greeks from the other Greek inhabitants of the empire,—they were called Hellenikoi.

No records exist after the time of Procopius, which furnish any authentic information concerning the details of the provincial and municipal administration of the Greek population. The condition of social civilization, the state of public roads and buildings, the nature of the judicial, civil, and police administration, and the extent of education among the people, which all powerfully influence the character and the prosperity of a nation, are utterly unknown. It is certain that they were all in a declining or totally neglected state. The deplorable condition to which Thessalonica was often reduced by famine, though situated in one of the richest provinces of Europe, has been already mentioned, and unfortunately these famines arose in as great a degree from the fiscal regulations and commercial monopolies of the Roman government, as from the devastations of the barbarians.\* The local administration of the Greek cities still retained some shadow of ancient forms, and senates existed in many, even to a late period of the Byzantine empire. Indeed, they must all have enjoyed very much the same form of government as Venice and Amalfi, at the period of their separation from the eastern empire.

The absence of all national feeling, which had ever been a distinguishing feature of the Roman government, continued to exert its influence at the court of Constantinople, long after the Greeks formed the

\* *Tafel. Thessalonica*, p. lxxvii.

bulk of the population of the empire. This anti-national spirit in the court and the administration, separated the governing classes from the people, and induced all those who obtained employments in the service of the state, to constitute themselves into a body, directly opposed to Greek nationality, because the Greeks formed the great mass of the governed. The election of many emperors not of Greek blood at this period, must be attributed to the strength of this feeling.\* This opposition between the Greek people and the imperial administration contributed, in a considerable degree, to revive the authority of the eastern church. The church was peculiarly Greek, indeed, so much so, that an admixture of foreign blood was generally almost equivalent to a taint of heresy. As the priests were chosen from every rank of society, the whole Greek nation was usually interested in the prosperity and passions of the church. In learning and moral character, the higher clergy were far superior to the rest of the aristocracy, and thus they possessed a moral influence capable of protecting their friends and adherents among the people, in many questions with the civil government. This legitimate authority, supported by national feelings and prejudices, was sure to acquire unbounded influence, the moment that the dispute concerning picture-worship ranged the Greek clergy and people on the same side, in their opposition to the imperial power. The Greek church appears for

\* Leontius was an Isaurian, NICEPH. PAT. 25. Leo, an Isaurian, see THEOPHANIS *Ch.* 300. LE BEAU, xii. 93. 97. Philippicus, an Armenian. Nicephorus was of Arabian descent. ABOU'LFARADJ, 139. Leo V. an Armenian. Michael the Second, of Amorium, was said to be a Jew. CEDRENI *H. C.* 2. 496.



a long period of history as the only public representative of the feelings and views of the nation, and after the accession of Leo the Isaurian, it must be regarded as the institution which preserved the national existence of the Greeks.

Amidst the numerous vices and errors in the social state of mankind at this period, it is consoling to be able to find a single virtue. The absence of all national feeling in the imperial armies exercised a humane influence on the wars which the empire carried on against the Saracens. It is certain that the religious hatred, subsequently so universal between the Christians and Mohammedans, was not very violent in the seventh and eighth centuries. The empire, it is true, was generally the loser by this want of national and patriotic feeling among the Christians. The facility with which the orthodox patriarchs of Jerusalem and Alexandria entered into negotiations with the caliphs, has been already noticed; but, on the other hand, the gain to humanity was immense, as is proved by the liberality of Moawyah, who rebuilt the church of Edessa. The Arabs for some time continued to be guided by the sentiments of justice which Mohammed had carefully inculcated, and their treatment of their heretic subjects was far from oppressive, in a religious point of view. When Abdalmelik desired to convert the splendid church of Damascus into a mosque, he abstained, on finding that the Christians of Damascus were entitled to keep possession of it, from the terms of their original capitulation. The insults which Justinian the Second, and the Caliph Walid, respectively offered to the religion of their rival,

were rather the effect of personal insolence and tyranny, than of any sentiment of religious bigotry. Justinian had also quarrelled with Abdalmelik, on account of the ordinary superscription of the caliph's letters—"Say there is one God, and that Mohammed is his prophet;" and Walid violently expelled the Christians from the great church of Damascus, and converted it into a mosque. At this period, any connection of Roman subjects with the Saracens was viewed as ordinary treason, and not as subsequently, in the time of the Crusades, in the light of an inexcusable act of sacrilege. The accusation brought against the Pope Martin, of corresponding with the Saracens, was not made with the intention of charging him with blacker treason than that which resulted from his supporting the rebel Exarch Olympius. All rebels naturally sought assistance from the Saracens, as the most powerful enemies of the empire, as soon as they found their enterprise desperate. The Armenian named Mizizius, who was proclaimed emperor at Syracuse, after the murder of Constans the Second, applied to the Saracens for aid, though the assistance which they furnished did not arrive until after his death. The Armenian Christians continually changed sides between the emperor and the caliph, as the alliance of each appeared to afford them the fairest hopes of serving their political and religious interests. But as the Greek nation became more and more identified with the political interests of the church, and as barbarism and ignorance spread more widely among the population of the Byzantine and Arabian empires, the feelings of mutual hatred became daily

more violent. They never, however, reached the same pitch of wild rage among the Greeks, which they attained in Western Europe ; and the Greeks, consequently, were very generally calumniated as traitors to the cause of Christianity, by the ignorant and bigoted Franks.

The government of the Roman empire had long been despotic and weak, and the financial administration both corrupt and oppressive ; but still its subjects enjoyed a benefit of which the rest of mankind were almost entirely destitute, in the existence of an admirable code of laws, and a complete judicial establishment, separated from all the other branches of the public administration. It is to the existence of this judicial establishment, guided by a published code of laws, and controlled by a body of lawyers educated in public schools, that the Greeks were chiefly indebted for the superiority in civilization which they still retained over the rest of the world. In spite of the neglect displayed in the other branches of the administration, the central government always devoted particular care to the dispensation of justice in private cases, as the surest means of maintaining its authority, and securing its power, against the evil effects of its fiscal extortions. The profession of the law continued to form an independent body, in which learning and reputation were a surer means of arriving at wealth and honour than the protection of the great ; for the government itself was, from interest, induced to select the ablest members of the legal profession for all judicial offices. The profit to be obtained by the sale of justice and of judicial offices was, even during the worst periods of Roman despo-

tism, too disgraceful to have been systematically pursued; and the existence of the legal profession, uniting together a numerous body of educated men, guided by the same general views, and connected by similar studies, habits of thought, and interests, must have given the lawyers an independence both of character and position, which, in the distant provinces of the empire, could not fail to operate as an effective check on the arbitrary abuse of administrative and fiscal power. The numerous regulations of Basil the Macedonian, Leo the Wise, and Constantine the Seventh, (Porphyrogenitus,) together with the compilation of the Basilics, shew the importance attributed to the due administration of justice in the most depraved period of the Byzantine empire, whenever the throne was occupied by men of reflection. As the legal profession never came into direct opposition with the church, and as, like the clergy, it was, from its nature and composition, imbued with some popular feelings, it contributed to support and extend the power of the church, whenever the clergy were placed in opposition to the imperial court on national and popular grounds.

In all countries which exist for any length of time in a state of civilization, a number of local, communal, and municipal institutions are created, which really perform a considerable portion of the duties of civil government; for no central administration can carry its control into every detail; and those governments which attempt to carry their interference farthest, are generally observed to be those which leave most of the real work of government undone. During the greater period of the

Roman domination, the Greeks had been allowed to retain their own municipal and provincial institutions, as has been stated in the earlier part of this work, and the details of the civil administration were left almost entirely in their hands. Justinian the First destroyed that part of this system which gave the towns and corporations any fiscal and military powers, by robbing them of all their revenues, and enforcing the principle of the Roman empire, that the state alone was charged with the defence of its subjects, by disarming, as far as lay in his power, the body of the people. The effects of the poverty and unprotected condition of the Greek population, have been seen in the facilities which it afforded to the ravages of the Avars and Slavonians. As the empire grew weaker, and the danger from the barbarians more imminent, the imperial regulations could not be regarded. Unless the Greeks had been armed, their towns and villages must all have fallen a prey to every passing band of brigands ; and their commerce would have been annihilated by Slavonian and Saracen cruisers. The inhabitants of Venice, Istria, and Dalmatia, the citizens of Gaeta, Capua, Naples, and Salerno, and the inhabitants of continental Greece, the Peloponnesus, and the Archipelago, would have been exterminated by their barbarous neighbours, unless they had possessed not only arms which they were able and willing to use, but also a municipal form of local administration capable of directing the energies of the people, without consulting the central government at Constantinople. The possession of arms, their successful employment in resisting the barbarians, and the

order and mild government of a native magistracy, gradually revived the spirit of independence; and to these circumstances must be traced the revival of the wealth of the Greek islands, and of the commercial cities of the Peloponnesus.

Although the period of history which has been treated in this work, has brought down the record of events to the final destruction of ancient political society, and even presents the dawn of the new combinations of national manners which characterize the middle ages, still the reader must carefully bear in mind, that the modifications effected in social life had not, in the seventh and eighth centuries, completely changed the external appearance of the ancient cities of the empire. Though the wealth and the numbers of the inhabitants had diminished, the public buildings and temples of the ancient Greeks existed in all their splendour, and it would be a very incorrect picture indeed of a Greek city of this period, to suppose that it resembled in any way the filthy and ill-constructed burghs of the middle ages.\* The solid fortifications of ancient military architecture still defended many cities against the assaults of the Slavonians, Bulgarians, and Saracens; the splendid monuments of ancient art were still preserved in all their brilliancy, though unheeded by the passer by; the agoras were frequented, though by a less numerous and less busy population; the ancient courts of justice were still in use; and the temples of Athens, Olympia, and Delphi, had yet

\* Some fine statues were found in the ruins of Eclana, a town near Beneventum, which was destroyed by Constantine the Second, (A. D. 663.) They were conveyed to Spain. LE BEAU, xi. 387.

received no injury from time, and little from neglect. The enmity of the iconoclasts to picture-worship, which, as Col. Leake\* justly remarks, has been the theme for much exaggeration, had not yet caused the destruction of the statues and paintings of pure Grecian art. The classical student, with Pausanias in his hand, might, unquestionably, have identified every ancient site noticed by that author in his travels, and viewed the greater part of the buildings which he describes. In many of the smaller cities of Greece, it is doubtless true, that the barbarians had left dreadful marks of their severity. When imperial vanity could be gratified by the destruction of ancient works of art, or when the value of their materials made these an object of cupidity, the finest masterpieces of sculpture were exposed to ruin. The Emperor Anastasius the First, permitted the finest bronze statues, which Constantine had collected from all the cities of Greece, to be melted into a colossal image of himself.† During the reign of Constans the Second, the bronze tiles of the Pantheon of Rome were taken away. Yet, new statues continued to be erected to the emperors, in the last days of the empire. A colossal statue of bronze, attributed to the Emperor Heraclius, existed

\* *Topography of Athens and the Demi*, vol. i. p. 65. I am not quite sure that the learned author is borne out in the assertion that "it was about the age of the iconoclastic dispute, that the productions of ancient sculpture finally disappeared from every part of the ancient world, with the sole exception of the Byzantine capital." They appear, from the position in which uninjured monuments are often found, to have been preserved untouched to a much later period, and it seems probable, that they only then began to be neglected, and to be exposed to destruction for the use of the materials of which they were composed.

† MALALAS, xvi. 42. ed Venet.

at Barletta, in Apulia, as late as the fourteenth century.\* That the Greeks had not yet lost all talent for art, is proved by the well executed cameos and intaglios, and the existing mosaics, which cannot be attributed to an earlier period. The soul of art, indeed, that public feeling which inspires correct taste, was extinct, and the excellence of execution still existing, was only the result of mechanical dexterity, and apt imitation of good models.

The destinies of literature were very similar to those of art ; nothing was now understood but what was directly connected with practical utility ; but the memory of the ancient writers was still respected, and the cultivation of literature still conferred a high degree of reputation. Learning was neither neglected nor despised, though its objects were sadly misunderstood, and its pursuits confined to a small circle of votaries. The learned institutions, the libraries, and the universities of Alexandria, Antioch, Berytus, and Nisibis, were destroyed ; but at Athens, Thessalonica, and Constantinople, schools of literature and science continued to flourish ; public libraries, and all the conveniences for a life of study, still existed. Many towns in Greece must have contained individuals who solaced their hours by the use of these libraries ; and although poverty, the difficulties of communication, and declining taste, daily circumscribed the numbers of the learned, there can be no doubt that they were never without

\* VISCONTI *Icon. Rom.* iv. 165.



some influence on society. Their habits of life, and the love of retirement, which a knowledge of the past state of their country tended to nourish, certainly inclined this class rather to conceal themselves from public notice, than to intrude on the attention of their countrymen. The few learned men, who sought fame by the publication of their works, were compelled to write for the public taste, instead of striving to emulate some model of classic excellence. The principal Greek poet who flourished during the latter years of the Roman empire, and whose writings have been preserved, is George Pisida, the author of three poems in iambic verses, on the exploits of Heraclius, written in the seventh century. It would perhaps be difficult, in the whole range of literature, to point to historical poetry which conveys less information on the subject which he pretends to celebrate, than that of George Pisida, and in taste and poetical inspiration, he is quite as deficient as in judgment.\* The historical literature of the period, is certainly superior to the poetical in merit, for though most of the writers offer little to praise in their style, still much that is curious and valuable is preserved in the portion of their writings which we possess. The fragments of the works of the historian Menander of Constantinople, written about the commencement of the seventh century, make us regret the loss of his entire work. From these important fragments we derive much valuable

\* The best edition is that of Bekker, in the collection of the Byzantine historians, now publishing at Bonn. It is included in the same volume as Paulus Silentiarius and the Patriarch Nicephorus. The two poets deserved an index, for nobody is likely to peruse them for amusement.

information concerning the state of the empire, and his literary merit is by no means contemptible.\* The most important work relating to this period, is the general history of Theophylactus Simocatta, who treats of the reign of the Emperor Maurice, and wrote in the earlier part of the seventh century. His work contains a great deal of curious information, evidently collected with considerable industry; but, as Gibbon remarks, he is harmless of taste or genius, and these deficiencies lead him to mistake the relative importance of historical facts.† He is supposed to have been of Egyptian origin.

Two chronological writers, John Malalas and the author of the *Chronicon Paschale*, likewise deserve notice, as they have preserved many facts not otherwise recorded; and both supply valuable and authentic testimony as to many important events. These writers have, however, been supposed to belong to a much later period. The many curious notices concerning earthquakes, inundations, fires, plagues, and prodigies, which appear in the Byzantine chronicles, afford strong ground for inferring, that something like our modern newspapers must have been published even in the latter days of the empire. The only ecclesiastical historian who belongs to this period is Evagrius, whose church history extends from A. D. 429, to 593. In literary merit, he is inferior to the civil historians, but his work has preserved many facts which would other-

\* The fragments of Menander are contained in the first volume of the Bonn edition of the Byzantine historians, a volume valuable to those who may feel little interest in the greater part of the collection.

† *Decline and Fall*, viii. 203, n. and 204, n.

wise have been lost. The greater number of the literary and scientific productions of this age are not deserving of particular notice. Few, even of the most learned and industrious scholars, consider that an acquaintance with the pages of those whose writings are preserved, is of more importance than a knowledge of the names of those whose works are lost.\* The discovery of paper, which Gibbon says came from Samarcand to Mecca about 710, contributed not a little to preserve learning in the East at this period of its decline, by rendering manuscripts cheaper and more accessible.

The mighty change which had taken place in the influence of Greek literature since the time of the Macedonian conquest deserves our attention. All the most valuable monuments of its excellence were then preserved, and time could have in no way diminished their value. The superiority of the Greeks in those departments of knowledge which the age was still qualified to appreciate, was almost as fully admitted at the court of the Arabian caliphs, as it had been at that of the Roman emperors. The mental supremacy of the Greeks had, nevertheless, received a far severer shock than their political power; and there was far less hope of their recovering from the blow, since they were themselves the real authors of their literary degeneracy, and the sole admirers of the inflated vanity which had be-

\* For information on Greek literary history, see FABRICII *Bibliotheca Græca*, ed. Harless. Hamb. 1790, &c. SCHOELL, *Histoire de la Littérature Grecque Profane*, &c. Paris, 1823, or the improved German translation by Dr Pinder. PETERSEN, *Handbuch der Griechischen Litteratur Geschichte*. Hamb. 1834.

come a national vice.\* The admitted superiority of Greek authors in taste and truth, those universal passports to admiration, had once induced a number of writers of foreign race to aspire to fame by writing in Greek; and this happened not only during the period of the Macedonian domination, but also under the Roman empire, after the Greeks had lost all political supremacy, when Latin was the official language of the civilized world, and the dialects of Egypt, Syria, and Armenia, possessed a civil and scientific, as well as an ecclesiastical literature.

The position of the Greek nation was completely changed by the conquests of the Arabs. The Greeks of Alexandria, Syria, and Cyrenaïca, soon became extinct; and the numbers of the votaries of Greek literature were diminished in the rest of the world; and even that portion of the literature itself which still retained a value in the eyes of mankind came to be viewed in a totally different light. The Arabs of the eighth century undoubtedly regarded the scientific literature of the Greeks with great respect, but they considered it only as a mine from which to extract a useful metal. The study of the Greek language was no longer a matter of the slightest importance, for the learned Arabians were satisfied if they could master the results of science by the translations of their Syrian subjects. It has been said, that Latin and Arabic have held the rank of universal languages as well as Greek, but the fact must be admitted only in the restricted sense of

\* DION. CHRYSOSTOMUS, *Or.* 38. Ἑλληνικὰ ἀμαρτήματα.

applying it to their extensive empire. The different range of the mental and moral power of the literatures of Arabia, of Rome, and Greece, is only, in our age, becoming fully apparent to the modern civilized world.

There is no country in the world more directly dependent on commerce for the well-being of its inhabitants, than the land occupied by the Greeks around the Egean Sea. Nature has separated these territories by mountains and seas into a variety of districts, whose productions are so different, that unless commerce afford great facilities for exchanging the surplus of each, the population must remain comparatively small, and must languish in a state of poverty and privation.

The Greeks still possessed the greater share of that commerce which they had for ages enjoyed in the Mediterranean. The ruin of Alexandria and Carthage undoubtedly gave it a severe blow, and the existence of a numerous maritime population in Syria, Egypt, and Africa, enabled the Arabs to share the profits of a trade which had hitherto been a monopoly of the Greeks. The absolute government of the caliphs, and their jealousy of their Christian subjects, rendered property too insecure in their dominions for commerce to flourish with the same tranquillity which it enjoyed under the legal despotism of the Byzantine emperors; for commerce cannot long exist without a systematic administration, and soon declines, if its natural course be at all interrupted.

The wealth of Syria at the time of its conquest by the Arabs, proves, that the commerce of the trading cities of the Roman empire was still con-

siderable. A caravan, consisting of four hundred loads of silk and sugar was on its way to Baalbec, at the time the place was attacked. Extensive manufactures of silk and dye-stuffs flourished, and several great fairs assisted in circulating the various commodities of the land through the different provinces.\* The establishment of post-horses was at first neglected by the Arabs, but it was soon perceived to be so essential to the prosperity of the country, that it was restored by the Caliph Moawyah. The Syrian cities continued, under the Saracen government, to retain their wealth and trade as long as their municipal rights were respected. No more remarkable proof of this fact need be adduced, than the circumstance of the local mints supplying the whole currency of the country until the year 695, when the Sultan Abdalmelik first established a national gold and silver coinage.†

Even the Arabian conquests were insufficient to deprive the empire of the great share which it held in the Indian trade. Though the Greeks were deprived of all direct political control over it, they still retained possession of the carrying trade of the south of Europe; and the Indian commodities, destined for that market, passed almost entirely through their hands. The Arabs, in spite of the various expeditions which they fitted out to attack Constantinople, never succeeded in forming a maritime power; and their naval strength declined, with the numbers and

\* OCKLEY, l. 166.

† SAULEY, *Lettres à M. Reinaud*, membre de l'institut, sur quelques points de la numismatique Arabe. CURT BOSE, *Ueber Arabische Byzantinische Münzen*. Gruninn, 1840.

wealth of their Christian subjects, until it dwindled into a few piratical squadrons.\* The emperors of Constantinople really remained the masters of the sea, and their subjects the inheritors of the riches which its commerce affords.†

The principal trade of the Greeks, after the Arabian conquests, consisted of three branches,—the Mediterranean trade, with the nations of Western Europe, the home trade, and the Black Sea trade. The state of society, in the south of Europe, was still so disordered, in consequence of the settlements of the barbarians, that the trade for supplying them with Indian commodities, and the manufactures of the East, was entirely in the hands of the Jews and Greeks, and commerce solely in that of the Greeks. The consumption of spices and incense was then enormous; a large quantity of spice was employed at the tables of the rich, and Christians then burned incense daily in their churches. The wealth engaged in carrying on this traffic belonged chiefly to the Greeks; and after the Arabs had rendered themselves masters of the two principal channels of the Indian trade, through Persia and Syria, and by the Red Sea and Egypt, they contrived to participate in its profits, as the distributors of its produce among the distant consumers. The consumption of Indian productions was generally too small, at any particular port, to admit of whole cargoes of these commodities' forming the staple

\* Compare THEOPHANIS Ch. 332, and *Scriptores post Theoph.* p. 46.

† Τί τὸν αὐτοκράτορα Κωνσταντινουπόλεως θαλασσοκρατοῦν μίχρη τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐπηλῶν καὶ πασῆς ὁμοῦ τῆς ᾧδε θαλάσσης. CONSTANT. PORPHYR. *De Them.* p. 58. ed. Bonn.

of a direct commerce with the West. The Greeks rendered this traffic profitable, as they remained in possession of the greater part of the countries which furnished Europe with silk, oil, and wine. The Greeks alone prepared the richest manufactures in silk, dyed wool, jewellery, and many articles of dress and ornament; and they were thus enabled to assort their different cargoes. The importance of this trade, with the power and influence which it conferred, was one of the principal causes which enabled the Roman empire to retain the conquests of Justinian in Spain and Sardinia. This commercial influence of the Greek nation checked the power of the Goths, the Lombards, and the Avars, and gained for the people as many friends as the avarice and tyranny of the exarchs and imperial officers created enemies. It may not, indeed, be superfluous here to remark, that the invectives against the government and persons of the exarchs, which abound in the works of the Italians, and from them have been copied into the historians of Western Europe, must always be sifted with care, as they, in fact, only give a correct picture of the violent aversion of the Latin ecclesiastics from the authority of the eastern empire. We are not to forget, that the people of Rome, Venice, and the south of Italy, clung to the Roman empire from feelings of interest, long after they possessed the power of assuming perfect independence. These feelings of interest arose from the commercial connection of the West and East. Venice, Genoa, and Amalfi, did not yet possess capital sufficient to carry on the eastern trade, without the assistance of the Greeks. The return



cargoes from the north, consisted chiefly of slaves, wood for building, raw materials of various kinds, and provisions for the maritime districts.\*

The most important branch of trade, in a large empire, must ever be that which is carried on within its own territory, for the advantage of its subjects. The peculiar circumstances have been noticed, that made the prosperity of the inhabitants of those countries, which composed the Roman empire after the time of Heraclius, essentially dependent on commerce; and the importance of the internal trade to the revenue was increased by the number of wealthy and civilized citizens, who still existed, in spite of the misery and depopulation of the empire.† This internal commerce, if it had been left unfettered by restrictions, would probably have saved the Roman empire; but the financial difficulties, caused by the lavish expenditure of Justinian the First, induced that emperor to invent a system of monopolies,‡ which was persisted in, and extended, until it threw the trade of the empire into the hands of the free citizens of Venice and Amalfi, whom it had compelled to assume independence. Silk, oil, and various manufactures, were government monopolies. Restrictions were at times laid on particular branches of trade, for the profit of

\* CONSTANT. PORPH. *De car. aula Byz.* l. i. c. 72. vol. i. p. 363. ed. Bonn. ANASTASIUS, *De vitis Pont. Rom.* p. 79. The Venetians, in 960, were forbidden by the pope to export Christian slaves to sell them to the Saracens.

† The ancient prosperity of Greece is shewn in the existence of numerous small towns celebrated for their manufactures. Thus the purple dye of Melibœa, a little town on Mount Ossa. LUCRETIVS, 2. 499. VIRGIL, *Æn.* 5. 251. LEAKE'S *Travels in Northern Greece*, iii. 388.

‡ PROCOPII *Hist. Arc.* c. 26.

favoured individuals.\* The traffic in grain, between the different provinces of the empire, was subjected to onerous, and often arbitrary arrangements;† and the difficulties which nature had opposed to the circulation of the necessaries of life, as an incentive to human industry, were increased, and the inequalities of price, augmented for the profit of the treasury, or the gain of the fiscal officers, until industry was destroyed by the burden.‡

These monopolies, and the administration which supported them, were naturally odious to the mercantile classes. When it became necessary, in order to continue the Mediterranean trade, to violate the great principle of the empire, that the subjects should not be intrusted with arms, nor fit out armed vessels to carry on distant commerce, these armed vessels, whenever they were able to do so with impunity, violated the monopolies and fiscal regulations of the emperors. The independence of the Italian and Dalmatian cities then became a condition of their commercial prosperity. There can be little doubt, that if the Greek commercial classes had been able to acquire as much relative power as the Italian, they, too, would have asserted their independence; for the emperors of Constantinople never viewed the merchants of their dominions in any other light than as a class from whom money was to be obtained in every possible way.§ This view is common in all absolute governments, and,

\* LEONIS GRAM. *Chron.* p. 477. A. D. 888.

† PROCOF. *Hist. Arc.* c. 22. p. 64.

‡ *Digest.* l. 50. tit. 5, *De vacat. et excusat. munerum*, l. 9. *De negotiatoribus frumentariis.*

§ PROCOF. *Hist. Arc.* c. 25.

joined to the aversion generally entertained by despots from the independent position and character of the mercantile classes, usually suggests such measures as eventually drive commerce from countries under despotic rule. The little republics of Greece, the free cities of the Syrian coast, Carthage, the republic of Italy, the Hanse towns, Holland, England, and America, all illustrate by their history how much trade is dependent on those free institutions which offer a security against financial oppression; while the Roman empire affords an instructive lesson of the converse.

The trade of Constantinople with the countries round the Black Sea, was an important element in the commercial prosperity of the empire. Byzantium had always served as the entrepot of this commerce, and the traffic to the south of the Hellespont, even before it became the capital of the Roman empire.\* After that event, its commerce was as much augmented as its population. It was supplied with a tribute of grain from Egypt, and one of cattle from the Tauric Chersonese, which kept provisions generally at a low price, and made it the seat of a flourishing manufacturing industry.† The commerce of the countries to the north of the Black Sea, the fur and the Indian trades, by the Caspian, the Oxus, and the Indus, centred at Constantinople, whence the merchants distributed these various articles among the nations of the West, and received in exchange the productions of these countries. The

\* POLYBII *Hist.* iv. s. 38. 4. (vol. ii. p. 55. ed. Tauch.)

† CEDRENIUS, 367. THEOPHANIS *Chron.* p. 149. CONSTANT. PORPH. *De Adm. Imp.* c. 6.

great value of this commerce, even to the barbarous nations which obtained a share in it, is frequently mentioned by the Byzantine historians. The Avars had profited greatly by this traffic, and the decline of their empire was attributed to its decay; though there can be little doubt that the real cause, both of the decline of the trade and of the Avar power, arose from the insecurity of property, originating in bad government.\* The wealth of the mercantile and manufacturing classes in Constantinople contributed, in no small degree, to the success with which that city repulsed the attacks of the Avars and the Saracens.

Nothing could tend more to give us a correct idea of the real position of the Greek nation at the commencement of the eighth century, than a view of the moral condition of the lower orders of the people; but, unfortunately, all materials, even for a cursory inquiry into this subject, are wanting. The few casual notices which can be gleaned from the lives of the saints, afford the only authentic evidence of popular feeling. It cannot, however, escape notice, that even the shock which the Mohammedan conquests had given to the orthodox church, had failed to recall its ministers back to their real duty of inculcating the pure principles of the Christian religion. They continued their old practice of confounding the intellects of their congregations, by discussing the unintelligible distinctions of scholastic theology. From the manner in which religion was treated by the eastern clergy, the people could take

\* SUIDAS, v. *Bulgari*, tom. i. 445.

little interest in its doctrines ; and they began to fall back on the idle traditions of their ancestors, and to join with the last recollections of paganism, new superstitions, derived from a perverted application of the consolations of Christianity. Relics of pagan usages were retained ; a belief that the spirits of the dead haunted the paths of the living, was general in all ranks ; a respect for the bones of martyrs, and a confidence in the figures on amulets, became the real doctrines of the popular faith. The connection which existed between the clergy and the people, powerful and great as it really was, appears at bottom to have been based on social and political grounds. Pure religion was so rare, that the word only served as a pretext for rendering the power of the clergy available ; and from this circumstance, the clergy appear as often to have made use of the superstitions of the people, as of their religious and moral feelings. The ignorant condition of the lower orders, and particularly of the rural population, explains the curious fact which has been already noticed, that paganism continued to exist in the mountains of Greece as late as the reign of the Emperor Basil, (A. D. 867—886,) when the Maniates of Mount Tagytus were at last converted to Christianity.\*

It has often been asserted, that about this time continental Greece, the Peloponnesus, and the islands of the Archipelago, were reduced to such a state of destitution and barbarism, that they are only mentioned by historians as places of banishment

\* CONSTANT. PORPHYR. *De adm. imp.* c. 50. vol. iii. 224. ed. Bonn.

for criminals.\* But this mode of announcing the fact, leaves an incorrect impression on the mind of the reader. We know from Constantine Porphyrogenitus, that Cherson was a powerful commercial city, whose alliance or enmity was of considerable importance to the Byzantine empire, even so late as the tenth century.† Yet this city was often selected as a place of banishment for persons of high rank, who were regarded as dangerous state criminals. Pope Martin was banished thither by Constans the Second; it was the place of exile of the Emperor Justinian the Second. The Emperor Philippicus, before he ascended the throne, had been exiled by Tiberius Apsimar to Cephallenia, and by Justinian the Second to Cherson, a circumstance which would lead us to infer, that a residence in the islands of Greece was considered a more agreeable sojourn than that of Cherson. Several of the adherents of Phillipicus were, after his dethronement, banished to Thessalonica, one of the richest and most populous cities of the empire.‡ It is evident, too, from the circumstances which are mentioned in connection with the exile of the sons of Constantine Copronymus to Athens, in the reign of the Empress Irene, A. D. 797, that Athens must have been a considerable city.§ It was evidently selected for the residence of the banished princes, on account of the devotion of its citizens to the cause of the empress, and to the vigilant watch over them which her brother was enabled to keep, from residing in

\* GIBBON, ix. 30. EMERSON'S *Hist. of Modern Greece*. i. 56.

† CONST. PORPH. *De adm. imp.* c. 53. vol. iii. 269. ed. Bonn.

‡ THEOPHANIS *Chron.* 321.

§ Ibid. 399.

the city. Athens, indeed, appears to have retained not only a considerable population, but also some degree of municipal liberty, and must have been very far from an insignificant town. For when the princes succeeded in forming a secret alliance with a neighbouring Sclavonian chief, by whose assistance they endeavoured to effect their escape, the empress, on discovering the plot, did not think it necessary to send troops to defend the city, so sure did she feel of the strength of Athens, and of the attachment and courage of the Athenians. She ordered, however, the eyes of the princes to be put out, and condemned them to a severer exile.

The command of the imperial troops in Greece was considered an office of high rank, and it was accordingly conferred on Leontius, when Justinian the Second wished to persuade that general that he was restored to favour. Leontius made it the stepping-stone to the throne. But the strongest proof of the wealth and prosperity of the cities of Greece, is to be found in the circumstance of their being able to fit out the expedition which ventured to attempt wresting Constantinople from the grasp of a soldier and statesman, such as Leo the Isaurian was known to be, at the time when the Greeks deliberately resolved to overturn his throne.

It is difficult to form any correct representation of a state of society so different from our own, as that which existed among the Greeks in the eighth century. The rural districts, on the one hand, were reduced to a state of desolation, and the towns, on the other, flourishing in wealth, with agriculture at the lowest ebb, and trade in a prosperous condition.

If, however, we consider the long series of misfortunes which were required to bring this favoured land to the state of complete destitution to which, at a later period, it sank, we may arrive at a more accurate knowledge of its condition than it would be possible, were we to confine ourselves to looking back at the records of its greatest splendour, and comparing a few lines which we find in the meagre chronicles of the Byzantine writers, with the volumes of earlier history, recounting the greatest actions—described with unrivalled elegance.





## APPENDIX I.

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COPIES, both of the original edition of the collection of the Byzantine historians, printed at Paris, and of the Venetian reprint, vary so much in the arrangement and number of the volumes, that an alphabetical catalogue of the works necessary, in order to form a complete set of these writers, may prove useful to students of the history of the eastern empire. A list of the Paris edition, as the volumes were first published, or at least as they were arranged in the oldest French catalogues, will be found in Ebert's *Bibliographisches Lexicon*, and in Schweiger's *Handbuch der Classischen Bibliographie*, and an alphabetical index of all the works, in the third volume of Pinder's *Geschichte der Griechischen Literatur*, von Schoell. It is needless to notice the superiority of the new edition, now in the course of publication at Bonn, which is often great. Still the older editions retain their value, as many works are merely reprinted.

1. PH. LABBÆI de Byzantinæ historiæ Scriptoribus emittendis ad omnes per orbem eruditos protrepticon. Parisiis, 1648.

Excerpta de legationibus ex DEXIPPO Aheniensi, EUNAPIO Sardonio, PETRO Patricio, PRISCO Sophista, MALCHO Philadelph., MENANDRO Protect., THEOPHYLACTO Simocatta, a D. Hoëschelio edita. Item Eclogæ historicorum de rebus Byzantinis, quorum integra scripta aut injuria temporum interciderunt, aut plura continent ad Constant. historiam minus spectantia. Selegit interp. recensuit notisque illust. PH. LABBÆ. Recensio auctorum, qui in hisce eclogis continentur. OLYMPIODORUS Thebæus, CANDIDUS Isaurus, THEOPHANES Byzantius de bello Justiniani adv. Persas, HESTYCHIUS Milesius de rebus patriis Constantinopoleos. Parisiis, 1648.

2. AGATHIÆ Scholastici de imperio et rebus gestis Justiniani, imp. libri V. gr. et lat. interpr. B. Vulcanio, access. ejusd. Agathia epigrammata. Parisiis, 1660.
3. ANASTASII Bibliothecarii Historia ecclesiastica, acced. notæ Car. Annib. Fabroti. Ejusd. Anastasii vitæ Pontificum Romanorum. Parisiis, 1649.
4. COMNENÆ Porphyrog. Cæsariis (Annæ) Alexias, lib. xv. a Pet. Passino, lat. interpret. glossario et notis illust., accesserunt prefat. ac notæ Dav. Hoëschelii. Parisiis, 1651.  
Notæ historicæ et philol. in Annæ Comnenæ Alexiadem. Parisiis, 1670.
5. and 6. BANDURI (Anselmi) Imperium Orientale, sive Antiquitates Constantinopolitanæ in quatuor partes distributæ. 2 vol. Parisiis, 1711.  
Vol. I. Constantini Porphyro. de Thematibus Orientis et Occidentis liber. Hieroclis Grammatici Synecdemus—Constantini Porphyro. de administrando imperio lib.—Agapeti Diaconi capita admonitoria ad Justinianum imp.—Basilii imp. capita exhortationum ad Leonem filium—Theophylacti Archiep. Bulg. institutio regia ad Constantinum Porphyrog.—Anonymi origines Constantinopolitanæ ac descriptio ædis Sophianæ—Breves demonstrationes chronographicæ incerti auctoris—Nicetæ Choniata narratio de statu Constantinopolitanis, quas Latini, capta urbe, in monetam conflaverunt.  
Vol. II. Ans. Banduri animadversiones in Constantini Porphyro. libros de thematibus et de adm. imperio; ac breves notæ ad opuscula Agapeti Diac. Basilii imp. et Theophylacti etc.
- 7, 8, and 9. CANTACUZENI (Joan.) Historia, gr. et lat. ex interpr. J. Pontani, c. ejusdem, et J. Gretseri, annot. 3 vol. Parisiis, 1645.
10. CEDRENI (Georgii) Compendium Historiarum, gr. et lat. ex vers. et c. not. G. Xylandri. Acce. ad not. J. Goar et Car. Annib. Fabroti glossar. in Cedrenum. Excerpta ex breviario historico Joannis Skylitzæ Curopolatæ. Parisiis, 1647.
11. CHALCOCONDYLÆ (Laonici) Historiar. lib. x. de origine et reb. gestis Turcorum gr. et lat. cum annalibus Sultanorum ex vers. J. Leunclavii. acc. C. A. Fabroti ind. gloss. Chalcocond. Parisiis, 1650.

12. *Chronicon Alexandrinum* s. *Chronicon Paschale a mundo condito ad Heraclii imp. a. 20. c. n. chron. et hist. cura Car. Dufresne Dn. du Cange.* Parisiis, 1688.
13. *Chronicon Orientale latinitate donatum ab Abrahamo Ecchellensi. Ejusd. Historiæ Orientalis supplementum.* Parisiis, 1651.
14. *Chronicon Orientale Petri Rahebi Ægypti ex Arabico latine reddittum ab Ab. Ecchellensi, nunc nova interpr. donatum a J. S. Assemano.* Fol. Venet. 1729.  
This Venetian edition is improved and augmented.
15. CINNAM (Joan) *Historiar. libr. vi. gr. et lat. c. not. hist. et philol. Car. Dufresne du Cange. acc. Pauli Silentiarii descriptio S. Sophiæ. gr. et lat. c. n. Ducange.* Parisiis, 1670.
16. CODINI (Georgii) et Anonymi excerpta de antiquitat. Constantinopolitanis, gr. et lat. ex vers. Petr. Lambecii. c. ejusd. not. acc. MANUEL. CHRYSOLARÆ, epist. iii. etc. IMP. LEONIS, oracula (c. fig.) gr. et lat. interpr. Bern. Medonio. Parisiis, 1655.
17. CODINI (Georgii) *De off. magnæ ecclesiæ et aulæ Constantinopolitanæ, gr. et lat. ex vers. J. Gretseri c. ejusd. comment. acc. notitiæ Græcorum episcopatum a Leone Sapiente ad Andronicum Palæologum a J. Goar.* Parisiis, 1648.
- 18 and 19. PORPHYROGEN. (Constantini) *Lib. ii. De ceremoniis aulæ Byzantinæ, gr. et lat. ed. J. H. Leich, et J. Jac. Reiske.* 2 vol. Lipsiæ, 1751.
20. *Corporis Historiæ Byz. nova appendix opera GEORGII PISIDÆ, THEODOSII Diaconi, et CORIPPI Africani complectens, c. notis P. F. Foggini.* Romæ, 1777.
21. DUCÆ, (J.) *Historia Byzantina, gr. et lat. not. illustrav. Ism. Bullialdi.* Parisiis, 1649.
22. DUFRESNE D. DUCANGE (Car.) *Historia Byzantina. duplici commentario illustrata, prior familias ac stemmata imperatorum Constantinopolit. cum eorundem numismatibus; alter descriptionem urbis Constantinopolitanæ sub imp. Christianis.* Parisiis, 1680.
23. GENESIUS (Jos.) *de reb. Constantinopolitanis, a Leone Armenio ad Basilium Macedonem—Geo. PHEANZÆ, Chronicon lat.—J. ANTIOCHENI cog. MALALÆ, Chronographia. R. BENTLEII, Epistola ad Millium. LEONIS ALLATII Opuscula.* Fol. Venet. 1733.

24. ACROPOLITÆ (Georgii) Historia, gr. et lat. JOELIS Chronographia Compendiaria, et J. CANANI, Narratio de bello Constantinopolitano, gr. et lat. ex interpr. Leon. Allatii c. ejusd. et Theod. Dousæ observ. acc. Alatii de Georgiis et eorum scriptis diatriba. Parisiis, 1651.
25. GLYCÆ (Mich.) Annales, gr. et lat. ex vers. J. Leunclavii, ex rec. et c. notis, Ph. Labbæi. Parisiis, 1660.
26. Historiæ Byzantinæ Scriptores post Theophanem. Parisiis, 1685.  
Chronici jassu Constantini Porphyrog. conscripti a Leone Armenio usque ad Michaellem Theoph. fil. libri iv. Constantinii Porphyrog. Basilii Macedo. — Anonymus continuator Theophanis—Orthodoxorum invectiva adv. Iconomachos.—Joannis Jerosolymitani narratio de Iconomachis — Joannis Cameniatae narratio de excidio urbis Thessalonicae—Demetri Cydonii monodia occisorum Thessalonicae — Symeonis Magistri ac Logothetæ Annales — Georgii Monachii, vitæ recentior. imp. a Leone Armenio usque ad Constantinum Porphyrogen.
27. LEONIS, (Diaconi,) Historia, scriptoresque ad res Byzantinas pertinentes etc. ed. C. B. Hase. Fol. Parisiis, 1819.  
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In order to form a complete set of works on Byzantine history, it is usual to add the following to the library.

49. *Histoire de l'Empire de Constantinople sous les empereurs François*, par GEOFFRAY de Ville-Hardouin, avec les notes du C. Dufresne, D. Du Cange. Paris, 1657.
50. DUFRESNE, DN. DU CANGE, (C.) *Dissertatio de imperator. Constantinop. numismat.* 4to. Rom. 1755.
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57. BOSCHII, (Petri,) *Tractatus de patriarchis Antiochenis*. Fol. Venet. 1748.
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60. BONGARSII, (Jac.) *Gesta Dei per Francos. s. et 61. Orientalium expeditionum et regni Francorum Hieroselymitani hist.* Fol. 2 vol. Hanov. 1611.

## APPENDIX II.

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### OBSERVATIONS ON THE COINS IN USE IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

THE gold coins vary considerably in value and weight at different times. The weight and value of the *aureus* under the following emperors is stated by Dureau de la Malle to be as follows :—

		Grains.	Francs.
Julius Cæsar,	weighed	153.5	value, 27.95
Augustus,	.	147.8	26.89
Tiberius,	.	146.	26.56
Nero,	.	139.7	25.42
Galba to Antoninus,		137.	24.95

*Economie Politique des Romains, tom. i. p. 44.*

The silver coin of the period was the *denarius*, which in the time of Nero was reduced to the 96th part of a Roman pound. An aureus was then of the value of a sovereign ; 25 denarii were equal to an aureus ; and 40 aurei to a Roman lb. weight of gold.

Sesterces.

4	=	1 Denarius of silver.
100	=	25 = 1 Aureus of gold.

In the time of Diocletian, there are pieces of silver with xvi. these equal 96 assaria, or 24 denarii, or 8 ounces of copper.

In the time of Constantine, the coinage was again reformed.  
A. D. 325.

Denarii.

4	=	1 follis, or ounce of copper.
48	=	12 = 1 keration.
96	=	24 = 2 = 1 millaresion.
5760	=	1440 = 120 = 60 = 1 lb of silver.



The value of the *solidus*, the gold coin of the eastern empire, varied also in weight and value.

	Grains.	value,	Franks.
In the time of Constantine it weighed	84.35		15.55
Theodosius I.	83.4		15.15
Theodosius II.	82.2		15
Zeno,	82.7		

72 *solidi* were equal to 1lb of gold, so that the *solidus* in the lower empire was generally worth 12s. The mint price of gold is L.3, 17s. 10½d.

The proportion of the value of silver to gold was, in the time of Julius Cæsar, as

	12 to 1
Arcadius,	14 to 1
Theodosius II.	18 to 1

In the year A. D. 396, 7000 *nummi* were equal to a *solidus*.

and 25lb of copper were also equal to a *solidus*.

100lb of copper were equal in value to 1lb of silver.

1800lb of copper were equal in value to 1lb of gold.

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